

*The Shadow
of Sparta*

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*The Shadow
of Sparta*

The Shadow of Sparta

Edited by
Anton Powell
and
Stephen Hodkinson



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INTRODUCTORY NOTE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work began as a colloquium held in March 1991 at the University of Wales, Cardiff, funded by Cardiff and organised under the aegis of the London Classical Society and the University of Manchester Ancient History Seminar. The original idea for the project was Powell's. Hodkinson and Powell shared equally in the inviting of contributors. Powell, with help from Hodkinson, saw the resulting book through the press. The aim of the project was to cast light both on non-Spartan thought and on Spartan practice. Contributors were asked to examine possible effects of images of Sparta, whether realistic or not, upon the thought of non-Spartan Greeks. Various approaches have been used. Some contributors trace what might seem fair representation or honest misunderstanding by non-Spartans of Spartan reality. Others examine anti-Spartan invective and pro-Spartan apologia in Athenian poetry. Others again ask whether ideal systems of education and of politics, described by Athenian prose-writers, were the product of conscious extrapolation of Spartan methods: how far, in short, writers sought to commend an imaginary 'super-Sparta'.

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I

EURIPIDES AND SPARTA

William Poole

While the Chorus of captive Trojan women are waiting to be allocated to their Greek masters, they speculate on where they might like to be sent. Athens, they think (*Tr.* 208 f.), is where they would most wish to go; failing that (214 f.), somewhere in Thessaly at the foot of Mount Olympus, where the Peneus flows, bringing prosperity and fruitfulness, as they have heard reported. They mention with approval two other places: Sicily, the land of Mount Aetna, opposite to Phoenicia; and the valley of the River Crathis, indicating Catania and Thurii as cities they might find it acceptable to go to. But not to Sparta, to the swirling streams of the Eurotas, the hated home of Helen, where as slaves they would come face to face with Menelaus, the sacker of Troy. Is this outburst against Sparta to be understood simply on a mythological plane, or is Euripides also making a hostile statement about the great contemporary adversary of Athens? Most people, I believe rightly, have taken the latter view. In this case the anachronistic references to cities in Magna Graecia seem to me to be decisive; but such questions are not always easy to answer convincingly.

The *Troades* was produced in March 415 BC, therefore written during a lull in hostilities between Athens and Sparta; but some ten years earlier a similar dilemma confronted the Chorus in the *Hecuba* (444 f.) This Chorus propose as possible destinations for themselves in the following order Doris (whose most important city is Sparta), Phthia, the islands (particularly Delos), and Athens; and they conclude with a general lament at the prospect of

slavery in any foreign land. Of these four possible destinations they spend most time on the last two, where they imagine a captivity devoted to religious tasks; they comment briefly on the fertility of Phthia, but they say nothing about Doris, and they express no preferences. It is possible to read this as a muted criticism of contemporary Sparta: slavery in a Dorian land is too terrible even to speak of.

Returning to the *Troades*, we find (30 f.) that the less important captives have been assigned to masters in Arcadia, Thessaly and Athens; but these are clearly only mentioned as examples among others. At 187 f. the Chorus imagine men from Argos, Phthia or the islands bearing them far away from Troy. Just before the passage I began by quoting, they conjure up various unpleasant fates that might befall them, concluding with that of being a miserable attendant charged with carrying the sacred waters of Pirene in Corinth. But for no other place do they express such revulsion as for Sparta, and it is noteworthy that, as soon as Talthybius comes in to tell them what has been decided for them, they immediately suppose (233 f.) that they must already be slaves of the land of Doris. When the herald tells them to ask each in turn and not all at once, they mournfully suggest (242 f.) Thessaly, Phthia or Thebes as places to which they may have been allotted. The destinies of the members of the royal family are then explored in detail. Finally (1092 f.), young captive women are pictured being borne away from their mothers by the Greeks to Salamis or Corinth. I see no contemporary significance in these choices of location beyond the rather trivial point that whenever Euripides lists places of slavery he is careful to include cities that fought on both sides in the Peloponnesian War. The above thoughts illustrate some of the difficulties that confront us in trying to determine Euripides' attitude to contemporary events in general, and Sparta in particular. How can we know what to count as evidence?

Euripides was a tragedian, not a historian, and unlike some earlier tragedians, such as Phrynichus in the *Capture of Miletus* and *Phoenician Women*, or Aeschylus in the *Persians* and *Women of*

Aetna, he never chose to dramatize contemporary or near-contemporary events. We should not therefore in my view seek to infer the course of contemporary events by reference to supposed mythological analogues in his plays. But it would be surprising if he did not intend members of his audiences to apply the universal themes with which tragedy deals to the particular circumstances prevailing at the time of performance. Knowing independently the date of production of the *Troades*, for example, can we doubt that during the prologue Euripides expected his audience to remember the outrage at Melos? Of course these circumstances will have been perceived differently by different individual spectators, and we do not have any reliable external evidence of how Euripides himself perceived them.

With regard to Sparta there are a number of interpretative problems we have to face, but one possibility we can dismiss immediately is that he was seeking to influence Spartan opinion, since, if Plutarch (*Mor.* 239b) is to be believed (and the genuineness of the work has been doubted), Spartans did not attend the theatre. But we have to decide to what extent mythological Sparta mirrored contemporary Sparta, and we have to recognize that Euripides' portrayal of Sparta need be neither fair nor accurate: it merely has to carry credibility in the context of current popular beliefs and aspirations. We must also remember that Euripides was producing plays over a period of almost fifty years, during the second half of which Athens and Sparta were either at war or in a state of suspended hostilities; so it would not be surprising if his attitude were modified during this time. It is clear from scholia and elsewhere that ancient writers believed that Euripides sometimes commented on contemporary events but we need to view their testimony with a good deal of scepticism, since some of the examples they adduce are either chronologically impossible – such as the claim of Diogenes Laertius (II 44) that the death of Palamedes is modelled on that of Socrates – or implausible in other ways. Plainly, they often had nothing more authoritative to guide them than intelligent

conjecture. In order to avoid making the same kind of mistakes ourselves, we need to have reliable objective criteria for dating the plays, which are not dependent upon otherwise arbitrary linkages with contemporary events. Attempts to date the plays simply on the basis of supposed contemporary allusions have been numerous, divergent and subjective. I accept the now widely-held view that the frequency and patterns of resolved feet in iambic trimeters afford the best objective criterion we have for establishing the composition dates of the plays, and it should be accorded priority over all others, except for direct citation of the *didascaliae*. In this connection it should be noted that Plutarch's dating of the *Erechtheus* (*Nic.* 9) on the basis of fr. 369 to shortly before the Peace of Nicias, though generally accepted by scholars since Wilamowitz, is unsupported by any reference to the production record and at variance with the metrical evidence, and should accordingly be treated as highly questionable. The work of Delebecque, Goossens and others is seriously vitiated by errors of this kind.

Another problem we have is that, because our knowledge of Sparta in the fifth century is significantly greater than that of any other non-Athenian polis, it is often difficult to know which features of Spartan society are predominantly or uniquely Spartan. Innovations or distortions in a traditional legend may indicate a desire by Euripides to make a contemporary comment. But even in the case of a writer of the fifth century it is often hard to decide which elements are to be attributed to his own invention, because of the loss of so much earlier material, and we have very little information on what led Euripides to dramatize a particular legend at a particular time, or to choose the particular form of it which he did. Except in relation to the origins and aftermath of the second Trojan War, and the return of the Heraclidae to the Peloponnese, Sparta is a much less rich source of mythic material than Argos/Mycenae or Thebes or Crete; yet in the case of those states, unlike Sparta in my view, it is impossible to form a coherent picture of Euripides' attitude towards them, if we take all of the relevant evidence from his

plays into account. This is because many myths do not simply belong to the cities in whose territory they are set, but to the whole of panhellenic culture; so we must be cautious about giving them a narrowly local significance. But the location of the action and the nationality of characters may be helpful pointers to the existence of contemporary comment, and so may lengthy digressions or irrelevant details, as well as anachronistic elements which reflect current political relationships rather than those of the heroic age. But even these may not be in themselves decisive, since they may be due to Euripides criticizing the treatment of a particular myth by an earlier tragic or epic poet. Finally, we must be careful not to equate characters' views with the author's views, and we must recognize that the agonistic structure of many Euripidean scenes makes it inherently likely that for every argument his plays contain in favour of a particular point of view, they will contain an equally cogent argument against it.

In surveying Euripides' views on Sparta I shall begin by considering legendary references of a general kind, and then go on to examine some specifically Spartan themes and characters to see what sort of picture emerges and how much of it can be related to the contemporary situation. I should say, however, that I do not believe it is profitable to equate specific mythological characters with specific contemporary individuals, as has sometimes been done.

At *Rh.* 254 f., if genuine, the Chorus wonder which of the Greeks Dolon in his wolf's disguise will manage to wound or kill; they hope it will be Menelaus, and that Dolon will bring back to Helen the head of her kinsman by marriage Agamemnon, who came with the grand fleet to Troy. At 365 f. the Atridae leaving Troy and crossing the sea to Sparta are mentioned by the Chorus as the precondition for re-establishing a peaceful way of life at Troy. Both these passages may have no application beyond the mythological situation.

At *Alc.* 445 f. Alcestis will be celebrated in song both at Sparta during the festival of the Carneia and at Athens rich and radiant.

This juxtaposition of the two great rivals in a peacetime activity doubtless reflects conditions at the time of production, 438 BC, during the thirty-year peace; but, as we shall see, in another play, *Telephus*, belonging to the same year, things are somewhat different.

At *Hcl*d. 740 f. Iolaus wishes for the strength he had in his youth when he and Heracles sacked Sparta together; Eurystheus would be an easier opponent to conquer, since he does not have the courage to face up to battle. The reference is to the vengeance which Heracles took on Hippocoon and his sons for the murder of Oeonus, and it is not one of his more prominent exploits. Euripides' mention of it here suggests confidence in his country's ability to defeat a formidable enemy if the need arose. At 1026 f. Eurystheus, defeated and captured, reveals an oracle to the effect that if he is buried at Pallene he will be in death an eternal protection to Athens against invaders, and an enemy to the descendants of Heracles, when they come there in great force, treacherously repudiating the benefit conferred by the Athenians on their ancestors. These words (1035 f.), *δταν μόλωσι δεῦρο σὺν πολλῇ χειρὶ χάριν προδόντες τήνδε*, have been held to refer to the invasion of Attica by the Spartans at the beginning of the Archidamian War, in breach of the thirty-year peace. Diodorus (XII 45) reports that in the invasion of 430 BC the tetrapolis of Marathon was spared from being devastated because it was the scene of the defeat of Eurystheus by the Heraclidae, who were ancestors of the Spartans. Zuntz (p. 83) on the other hand argues that since the Spartans must have passed by the grave of Eurystheus at Pallene in the campaigning season of 430 without incurring disaster, the play can only have been produced in the spring of that year. But need the condition introduced by these words ever have become operative, and might the play therefore not pre-date the war by several years? At *Er*. 87 f. Athena tells Praxithea that an inviolable precinct must be marked out in commemoration of her daughters, and that enemies must be prevented from sacrificing there in secret, otherwise there will be victory for them, and pain for the land of

Athens. But I can think of no occasion during the period when the play must have been written on which this ever became a real possibility. At any rate, in the passage from *Heracleidae* the Dorians are clearly seen as a threat to Athens.

Accius (266 R2) states: 'If he survives, I will give him Sparta and Amyclae.' This line comes from Accius' *Chrysippus*, which I believe to be derived from Euripides' play, which in turn I would date to around 430. It belongs to an account of the division of Pelops' estate among his sons, and it is Chrysippus himself who is to receive these two towns, though his untimely death frustrates his father's intentions. No political inference can in my view be legitimately drawn from this disposition of territory.

At *Andr.* 445 f. we have a virulent denunciation of Spartans as treacherous, deceitful, bloodthirsty and unjustly successful in Greece. The scholiast refers it to a truce violation by the Spartans, but since there was no production record for the play, which may have been put on either at Athens pseudonymously or somewhere abroad, he is unable to be more precise. Although it is relevant to the dramatic context, most critics have agreed with the scholiast in giving the passage a contemporary significance. We are reminded of the kind of anti-Spartan feeling which Dicaeopolis tries to combat at about the same date, for example, *Ar. Ach.* 307 f. : 'How can you go on saying that it was a good thing to make a truce with people who no longer have any respect for altars, pledges or oaths?' Metrical evidence would date the *Andromache* to around 426–425 bc which is too early for a reference to the activities of Brasidas in Thrace; perhaps the circumstances surrounding the outbreak of the war itself are what Euripides had in mind.

Our best chance of learning Euripides' views on the origins of the war would be if we could discover more about the speeches of the Greek and Trojan envoys in the *Philoctetes*, which was produced in 431, and where issues of public policy were certainly raised. But we can gain some insights from a surviving play belonging to the same production. Page (1952: x) and

others have argued that the emphasis on oath breaking in the *Medea* is relevant to the political situation at the time. He cites passages from Thucydides (I 146 and III 83) on alleged violations of the thirty-year peace, and on the deterioration of civilized relations between Greek states generally, and links these to passages in the *Medea*, of which the most striking is 439 f.: 'Delight in sworn pledges has vanished, and no longer is there any sense of shame left in great Hellas; it has flown away into the upper air.' This comment of the Chorus is clearly appropriate to the private conflict of the play; Medea refers throughout to Jason's breach of his marriage vows to her, and the affront to the gods which this constitutes (20 f., 160 f., 168 f., 207 f., 1391 f. and especially 492 f.). Yet she still thinks it worthwhile, from her position of weakness and insecurity, to extort an oath from Aegeus to protect her (734 f.), although she claims to trust him, apparently unmindful of the Chorus' remarks about the treachery of men and the unreliability of faith in the gods (411 f.). Despite the famous equivocation of Hippolytus, 'My tongue is under oath, my mind is unsworn' (*Hip.* 612), there are in fact very few examples other than Jason of oath breakers in Euripides, least of all Hippolytus himself: I can find only Eteocles (*Ph.* 481 f.), the generals (*Ph.* 1240 f., if genuine), and the comic Silenus (*Cyc.* 262 f.), which hardly counts. In a few other cases the content of the oath is immoral: perhaps Medea herself (*Med.* 394 f.), Orestes and his friends (*Andr.* 999 f.), Capaneus (*Sup.* 496 f.), perhaps Adrastus (*Ph.* 427 f.), and Tyndareus and his followers (*I.A.* 391 f.), on which more later. A character in the *Polyidus* (fr. 645), probably Minos, expresses the view that the gods seem to condone the use of an oath to evade death or other calamities: 'Therefore either they must be less intelligent than mortals, or they rate expediency above justice.' But normally in Euripides oaths are sought and given in a just cause and with the valid expectation that they will be kept. Therefore, although I do not think that the Thessalian Jason has in most respects been portrayed by Euripides in the likeness of a Spartan, I believe that Page is right to see in *Med.* 439 f. a

reference to the political circumstances at the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, and to the charges of truce violation made by Athenians against the Spartan alliance. And there is one other passage which lends support to this view. In his great speech denying the existence of the gods, Bellerophon observes (fr. 286.5 f.):

I call it tyranny when people commit mass killings, or take away the property of others, or plunder cities in violation of oaths. And yet those who do these things are more fortunate than people who lead a life of piety in quiet. I know of small cities which honour the gods, but are subject to larger, more impious cities, subdued by the weight of superior armed force.

This play was produced in 427 or 426 (it is metrically more sophisticated than *Hip.*, and precedes *Ar. Ach.* 426 f.). Euripides may have had Plataea specifically in mind, or perhaps Mytilene, but I have no doubt that with this wide-ranging indictment of aggressive international behaviour he intended the audience to recall instances of the breakdown of inter-state relations which the war produced.

To return to the *Andromache* (473 f.), twofold tyrannies are not easier than single ones to bear: it is one burden heaped upon another, and a source of civil strife. In the dramatic context this is adduced as a parallel to a condemnation of men with two wives, but I have no doubt that it is covertly directed against dual kingship at Sparta. In the course of an explanation of Helen's conduct in allowing herself to be carried off to Troy by Paris, Peleus launches into a ferocious attack (*Andr.* 595 f.) on the unchastity of Spartan women, which he attributes to their scanty dress revealing their bare thighs, and to their leaving home with young men to participate in running and wrestling contests, something not to be tolerated. Notwithstanding the fact that these remarks are appropriate in the mouth of a hero elsewhere (*Ar. Nub.* 1061 f.) noted for his chastity, a characteristic of him not especially emphasized in this play, they should

certainly be seen as an attack on the freer lifestyle of contemporary Spartan women, with particular reference perhaps to the practice of wife-borrowing for the procreation of children attested by Xenophon (*Lac. Pol.* I 9) and others. This theme is continued in the portrayal of Hermione elsewhere in the play. She is strongwilled and ruthless when she has the active support of her father, self-pitying and suicidal when left alone by him. The nurse (*Andr.* 804 f.) describes her psychological disintegration, and urges her (831) when she reappears on the stage not to display herself indecently. She assumes a state of helplessness and shows a repentance for her previous actions (919) which it is hard to treat as likely to endure, when once there is the prospect of acquiring a new protector, though she is careful to tell him (987 f.) that only her father can dispose of her in marriage. She too (930 f.) makes a fierce onslaught on women's unchastity, and particularly the bad influence they exert on one another, culminating in advice to lock them away in seclusion from mischievous and interfering outsiders, which the Chorus reject as extreme. It also goes beyond the needs of the dramatic situation and the requirements of anti-Spartan propaganda, as we can see from parallel passages in other plays (*Hip.* 645 f., fr. 111 from the *Alope*, fr. 1061, 1063). In the *Orestes* Hermione is a totally different character. Though sympathetic (*Or.* 1329, 1345) to the plight of Orestes and Electra, she is nevertheless taken hostage by the terrorists and threatened with death. But the charge of inherited *φιλανδρία* ('lust for men') made against her by Andromache (*Andr.* 229 f.) clearly relates to the theme of wife-borrowing.

At *Andr.* 724 f. Peleus states that, but for their reputation with the spear and their contests on the battlefield, the Spartans would be of no account. This would of course be dismissed as sour grapes by Spartan sympathizers in the audience, but the idea that military skill and prowess is not the supreme human value is explored elsewhere by Euripides, and certainly deserves serious attention. *Andr.* 733 f. refers to a city not far from Sparta, which has turned from friendship to enmity, and which

Menelaus announces his intention of going to subdue. This unnamed city has been identified as either Argos or Mantinea, though the treaty with Athens in 420 BC is too late to be the focus of reference. More probably Euripides has no specific city in mind, but is merely pointing to a widely recognized tendency by Sparta to interfere in the affairs of neighbouring states.

The next play has been thought by Delebecque (1951: 151) to be markedly milder towards Sparta in tone. At *Hec.* 650 f. we are told that Spartan women suffer as the victims of war just as much as Trojan women do. But perhaps the captive Chorus is deriving a grim satisfaction from this equality of fortune. At 933 f. a member of the Chorus recalls during the sack of Troy hurrying from her bed wearing a single garment like a Dorian girl, and praying at the altar of Artemis in vain. Once again, is this simply an expression of shared misfortune, or, as I prefer to think, does her momentary resemblance to one of the enemy women add an extra touch of horror to the recollection of that night?

At *Sup.* 184 f. Adrastus has come to Athens to seek redress for an injustice committed by the Thebans, who have refused to allow the Argives to bury their dead after the Battle of the Seven against Thebes, a situation reminiscent of the aftermath of Delium in the autumn of 424 BC. He is explaining why he did not ask help from the Peloponnesians first. Sparta, he says, is cruel and double-dealing, while other cities are small and weak. This represents the contemporary power situation, not the mythical one, and entitles us to believe that the disparaging comments of Adrastus are intended to apply to contemporary Sparta.

Sup. 1191 f. gives the terms of an oath which Athena instructs Theseus to exact from Adrastus before returning the remains of the Argive dead (1185 f.). It must pre-date the actual treaty of 420 BC from which it has been observed to differ significantly in making Argos an inferior partner to the agreement. It provides among other things that, in the event of an attack by a third state, Argos must interpose its armed forces on behalf of Athens;

the words ἄλλων τ' ἰόντων ('and if others invade') have been taken to refer to Sparta, so that the passage is a plea to contemporary Argos to end its neutrality.

At *El.* 409 f. Electra asks for her father's aged tutor, who has been expelled from the city, to be fetched from the place where he looks after his flocks beside the River Tanaus, which marks the boundary between Argive and Spartan territory. I suggest that he has been deliberately sent to an exposed and dangerous frontier position because contemporary Sparta is perceived by Euripides to constitute a threat to Argos. Orestes, who is pretending to be a Thessalian (817 f.), accepts Aegisthus' invitation to demonstrate the skill of his supposed countrymen in dismembering a sacrificial victim, and he uses a Dorian knife to do it. But when he comes to cut up the portions for the banquet (835 f.), he calls for the Dorian knife to be replaced by a shorter one from Phthia, and it is with this that he kills Aegisthus. This is one of several examples where Euripides systematically (with the notable exception of Jason) favours Thessalian as against Dorian, or more particularly Spartan, things or people (cf. *Ph.* 1407 f. for the Thessalian stratagem by which Eteocles gains what should have been a decisive advantage in battle against his opponent, an Argive by adoption).

A debate on the relative merits of different weapon systems, with Lycus as the spokesman for the hoplite's shield and spear, and Amphitryon putting the case for the archer's bow and arrows, occurs at *Her.* 157 f., 188 f. Bond is inclined to dismiss this lengthy digression as an empty rhetorical exercise, but it clearly has dramatic relevance. The proper use of strength in general, and of the bow of Heracles in particular, is a major theme of the play, culminating in his moving address to his weapon (1376 f.); the question is whether there is also a more immediate contemporary relevance. Attempts to relate the dispute to the military tactics of some specific battle are in my view misplaced. Heracles is a panhellenic hero in this play, who uses non-Dorian weapons, and it is possible that the defence of the hoplite formation, put into the mouth of an alien usurper, was

intended to arouse feeling against Sparta, the supreme exponent of this method of fighting, as it almost certainly is in the brief exchange between Menelaus and Teucer (Soph. *Aj.* 1120 f.), though there it is part of a much wider debate. Sparta did not begin to introduce archers into her army until around 425 BC, several years before the date of the *Heracles*. Bond also refers to Aesch. *Per.* 146 f., likewise a very brief passage, where the shield and spear represent Greek forces, and the bow and arrows barbarians; but this seems to me to be irrelevant to the interpretation of Euripides.

At *Her.* 474 f. Megara, having described how Heracles intended to divide his territories among his three sons, goes on to outline her marriage plans for them. Alliances with Athens, Sparta and Thebes were to have been the corner-stones of a strong security pact. This is the only explicit reference to Sparta in the play, which was produced some time between the Peace of Nicias and 414 BC. The disposition reflects contemporary, not mythological, power relations. Might it also point to a desire by Euripides at this time to see the attempted formation of such a grand alliance, however unlikely of attainment this might seem, as holding out the only prospect for avoiding another destructive period of warfare?

At *I.T.* 399 f. the Chorus of Greek captives speculate on the identity and country of origin of the two young men who are about to be brought on stage as sacrificial victims for Artemis, and suggest that they might have come from Sparta or Thebes, both hostile states at this time. A few lines earlier (354 f.) Iphigenia herself had expressed the wish that a ship might have brought Helen and Menelaus, so that she could take vengeance on them for Aulis; and the Chorus reaffirm this wish (439 f.). If there is any contemporary resonance in these passages, particularly the first, it would appear to conflict with my suggested interpretation of *Her.* 474 f.

At *I.T.* 1166 Thoas asks Iphigenia whether the statue of Artemis moved on its base of its own accord, or as the result of an earthquake. It has been suggested by Delebeque (1951: 269)

that there may be an allusion here to the earthquake which caused the Spartans to retreat from Cleonae in the spring of 414 BC: this would date the play to 413 or 412. But I do not find the parallel compelling.

At *Ion* 1589 f. Euripides adopts for Dorus a different genealogy from the one derived from Hesiod (fr. 9 West) which he had earlier used in the prologue of the *Wise Melanippe* (8 f.), to judge from a defective text. In our play Dorus is not the brother of Xuthus, but his son by Creusa, and therefore the younger half-brother of the founder of the Ionian race, who moreover has the advantage of having Apollo as his father. With Murray and Diggle's punctuation, the city that will be celebrated in song throughout the Peloponnese must be Sparta.

At *Hel.* 1465 f. the Chorus mention some of the scenes that await Helen on her return home from Egypt. They make brief allusions to cults connected with the tragic stories of the Leucippides and Hyacinthus, and to the fact that her daughter Hermione's marriage has not yet been solemnized. They appear to me to cast something of a shadow over her homecoming, in contrast with the general mood of rejoicing which characterizes the later scenes of this play. I am not sure whether or how this can be reconciled with any attempt to give a political interpretation to the play as a whole but certainly the other references to Athena of the brazen house (227, 249) are purely for local colour.

From the above summary of general references to Sparta a predominantly negative picture emerges. This is especially sharp in *Andr.*, which was written around 425 BC and may have been produced outside Athens. I now turn to some more specific themes and individuals.

Euripides wrote four plays about the return of the Heraclidae to the Peloponnese, the mythological event which corresponds historically to the establishment of Dorian supremacy within the area. These are: *Cresphontes*, written shortly before 424 BC when

its peace Chorus (fr. 453) was parodied in Aristophanes' *Farmers; Temenus*, of uncertain date; and *Temenidae* and *Archelaus*, both very late. Since the publication of Pap. Oxy. 2455, containing substantial fragments of Euripidean plot summaries, we now know that two of these plays included divergent accounts of the lottery to apportion the land, in which Temenus obtained Argos, Cresphontes Messenia, and the sons of Aristodemus Laconia. Fr. 1083, from a very late play, and fr. 742 and 748 from the *Temenus*, were already known to deal with this subject. The distribution of plot summary fragments among these plays is a matter of dispute, which I shall not attempt to disentangle here, except to say that involving the *Archelaus* creates extreme difficulty, since this is a play primarily if not exclusively concerned with events in Macedonia. But despite many uncertainties, there are several points about Sparta which are still worth making.

1) With the exception of the peace Chorus already mentioned, the surviving fragments, mainly gnomic utterances, exhibit a markedly more exuberant attitude to war than we find in those extant plays which have a substantial Spartan content (*Andr., Tr., Hel., Or., I.A.*).

2) Fr. 1083.9 f. characterizes Laconia as φαύλου χθονός ἀρετὴν ἐχούσης μείζον' ἢ λόγῳ φράσαι (a paltry land, but with greater virtue than words can express), which is more positive towards Sparta than most of the references I have so far discussed.

3) In one of the plays, in order to obtain Argos it is necessary for Temenus to remove Tisamenus, son of Orestes and Hermione, who is king there. From a seriously imperfect text it appears that a spy is sent to Sparta to find out how their dispute with Messenia is going, with a view to forming a favourable alliance. But it is not clear who eventually assists Temenus to gain possession of Argos, or what relationship Euripides' treatment of the subject may have to the account given by Pausanias (VII 1 3) of how in accordance with an oracle the bones of Tisamenus were removed from Helice to Sparta.

4) Pap. Oxy. 2458, l 17 f. from the *Cresphontes* tells how Polyphontes killed his kinsman the elder Cresphontes, usurped the throne of Messenia, and forcibly married the murdered king's widow Merope. But it is not clear what role if any Sparta played in all this. Euripides' version appears to be at variance with the story told by Isocrates (*Arch.* 41) that the Messenians rewarded the Spartans by allowing them to take over their *polis* because they had avenged the murder of King Cresphontes in a popular insurrection. *Stasis* in Messenia was certainly a feature of Euripides' play, which was roughly contemporary with the *Andromache*, and a play in favour of Messenian independence written at this time must have been viewed as hostile to Sparta. Messenia was not liberated from Spartan control until after the battle of Leuctra. The sons of Aristodemus (rather than Lycurgus) were according to Strabo (VIII v 5) the founders of the Spartan constitution.

5) The *Archelaus* is known to have been first produced at the court of King Archelaus of Macedon, and the *Temenidae* may have been produced with it; this could explain the positive attitude to military activity seen in many of the fragments.

The next topic I want to deal with is the criticism made by Euripides against Spartans generally, but especially Menelaus, that they interfered aggressively in the affairs of other states. This has a basis in contemporary opinion, and the earliest play in which it can be traced is the *Telephus* (438 bc) which pre-dates the war. A quarrel develops between Agamemnon and Menelaus, which may already have become a traditional element in the legend. Someone (presumably Menelaus) is urged (fr. 716) to yield to necessity and not fight against the gods, but to look the speaker in the face and control his temper: God humbles the mighty and puts them in their place. Doubtless the same person is told (fr. 718) that it is time to show greater intelligence than passion. Someone (presumably Menelaus) asks (fr. 719): 'Are we Greeks going to be slaves to the barbarians?' There is a rapid exchange of dialogue in anapaests, in which Agamemnon too

appears to be losing command of himself. At fr. 713 he calls upon the city of Argos to hear what Menelaus is saying, and he declares (fr. 722): 'Go where you like: I won't be destroyed for the sake of your Helen.' Finally, at fr. 723 he says: 'Sparta was your inheritance: govern her, and leave Mycenae to me.' It is not absolutely certain that the three iambic fragments quoted above all belong to this scene, and it is unclear what issues have provoked the quarrel. The question of sacrificing Iphigenia has not yet arisen, but the brilliant quarrel scene in the *I.A.*, to which we shall come shortly, is doubtless modelled on the one in this play.

In the *Andromache* Menelaus' desire to interfere in the domestic affairs of Phthia in the absence of its young ruler is manifest. He has come specially from Sparta (41 f., 916) to help his daughter to kill Andromache and her son by Neoptolemus. When Andromache hears (68 f.) of their plot to murder her child, she describes them (75) as two vultures. Menelaus uses the child (314 f.) as a lever to drive her from the protection of the altar of Thetis, and then (435 f.) gloats truculently over the success of this deception. He defends his right to take this action (376 f.) by asserting that among true friends all property is in common, only to be told later by Peleus (581 f.) that he is not free to do what he likes with members of *his* household: 'Are you coming here to occupy my house? Isn't it enough for you to rule over Sparta?' It should be noted that Xenophon (*Lac. Pol.* VI 1 f.) reports that, whereas in other cities the control of children, domestic servants and other property was exercised on an individual basis, Lycurgus legislated that in Sparta authority over children could be shared by males other than the father, and that such things as hunting dogs, horses and other commodities could in case of need be appropriated for use by someone other than the owner (cf. also Arist. *Pol.* 1263a32).

In the *Orestes* Menelaus and Tyndareus, of whom more later, are up to the same game in Argos, seeking to exert a baleful influence on a crucial debate in someone else's assembly. Electra tells (*Or.* 1056 f.) how Menelaus treacherously declined to speak

in defence of her brother's life and Orestes adds that the Spartan hid his face, keeping a prudent eye on the throne, soon to be vacant. That this view of his conduct is to be accepted is confirmed when Apollo in the exodos (1660 f.) tells Menelaus to let Orestes govern Argos, while he himself goes back to rule Sparta. These words clearly echo and contradict the advice given earlier by Tyndareus to Menelaus (536 f., 625 f., whichever is genuine) not to return to Sparta unless he allowed Orestes to be stoned by the citizens of Argos. In the corresponding situation in the *Electra* (1250 f.), Orestes is not allowed to return to Argos until he has expiated his matricide and founded his eponymous city in Arcadia, and it is left unclear whether he will even then be able to go back. Meanwhile (1278 f.) Menelaus and Helen will bury Clytemnestra and presumably exercise some kind of regency, though the details are not elaborated. It is noteworthy, however, that at *I.T.* 928 f., when Orestes tells his other sister that he is an exile and Menelaus rules in Argos, and when Iphigenia asks whether this means that their uncle has annexed (ὑβρίσεν) a house in trouble, he replies in the negative: it is fear of the Furies that has driven him from the land. Here Menelaus' takeover, which is about to be ended, appears to be benevolent. I would suggest that in this play Euripides does not want to raise the issue of usurpation, any more than he wants to discuss the morality of matricide; so he simply truncates the myth.

In the *I.A.* there is another example of interference by Menelaus. At 303 f. he is shown in a brawl with a slave, trying to gain possession of a private letter from Agamemnon to Clytemnestra. The slave characteristically defends his master's best interests, but (314 f.) Menelaus snatches away the letter without regard for justice, and having opened and read it, threatens to make its contents public. The situation is in important respects reminiscent of that in the *Andromache*: again Menelaus mistreats a slave and makes free with the property of a kinsman, this time one by blood, not marriage. In the earlier play too (*Andr.* 549 f.) Peleus had accused Menelaus of preferring hasty action to justice, and now (*I.A.* 331) Agamemnon uses the same metaphor of

not being allowed to occupy his own house. A splendid quarrel ensues, in which both brothers are exposed as in different ways ignoble: Agamemnon power-hungry, indecisive and fearful of popular opinion; Menelaus quick-tempered, uxorious and willing to pursue an unjust war by means no matter how unscrupulous. It is true that (479 f.) Menelaus eventually repents, but I shall discuss his change of heart more fully later.

I turn now to another theme, that of Spartans being corrupted by foreign wealth and oriental luxury. Spartans of the fifth century were very restricted with regard to travelling abroad. Foreign habits were believed to exert a corrupting influence on them. The regent Pausanias, victor of Plataea, was accused of having adopted Persian manners, giving banquets in an oriental style and fomenting a helot revolt; and, having been betrayed by a former boyfriend, he was convicted of treason but allowed to starve to death (Thuc. I 131 f.). King Plistoanax was found guilty of bribery, and exiled for twenty-five years. The Harmosts installed by Sparta to govern territories which seceded from the Athenian alliance after the failure of the Sicilian Expedition sometimes proved to be venal and rapacious. The acquisition by Spartans of gold and silver as war spoils is also said to have given them a taste for wealth and ostentatious living which was clearly at variance with their austere ideals. It would not be surprising if people schooled in the severities of Spartan discipline when at home should, when exposed to the more relaxed way of life of other cities, have sometimes yielded to the temptations of extravagance and excess. In Euripides, however, it is usually Spartan women who exhibit this tendency. At *Cyc.* 182 f. the Chorus describe Helen's state of excitement on seeing Paris dressed in gaudy tight-fitting Phrygian trousers and wearing a golden necklace. Gang rape, they think (180), would be a suitable penalty for such a dissolute woman, and they wouldn't mind participating (187).

At *Andr.* 147 f. Hermione comes on stage dressed in gorgeous attire, which she says was not obtained from the house of Achilles or Peleus, but was a present from her father Menelaus; and

this gives her the confidence to speak freely. She is accused (209 f.) of flaunting her wealth as a token of Spartan power while treating Scyros, where her husband comes from, as of no account. At *El.* 314 f. Electra describes her mother as enthroned among Phrygian war spoils and surrounded by Asiatic maid-servants, her father's captives, arrayed in Trojan finery. There may be some exaggeration here, for when Clytemnestra herself arrives in her carriage at Electra's cottage, she says (998 f.) that, since the temples have been decorated with Phrygian spoils, she has only these picked Trojan slaves as a poor recompense for her sacrificed daughter. But the tendency is unmistakable. After being compared (1062 f.) in beauty with her sister Helen, Clytemnestra is portrayed (1071) as dressing her golden hair in a mirror while her husband is away at the war.

At *Tr.* 993 f. Hecuba tells how Helen possessed little while she was living in Argos, but when she left Sparta and found the city of Troy awash with gold, she hoped to overwhelm it with her expensive living. Menelaus' house was not fine enough for her to flaunt her luxurious tastes in. Shortly afterwards (1020 f.) we learn of her insolence in the house of Alexander, and of her desire to have barbarians prostrate themselves before her. The Chorus (1104 f.) contrast their tearful voyage to slavery in Greece with the golden mirrors, that girls delight in, which Helen will have. At *Hel.* 926 f. the heroine laments the fact that she is hated by everyone because of her reputation, false in this play, for having betrayed her husband and gone to live in Phrygia with its golden riches.

The same theme recurs in the *Orestes*. Helen only trims her hair (128 f.) in mourning for her sister Clytemnestra in such a way as to preserve her beauty; she is the same as she always was. When the terrorist plot is being devised, it is pointed out (1110 f.) that there is no need to fear her barbarian attendants, mere guardians of her mirrors and potions. She has brought all her Trojan luxury with her. Greece is not grand enough for her. Electra describes her (1338) sarcastically to Hermione as *τῇ μέγ' ὀλβίαι* ('filthy rich') and almost betrays the plotters' intentions.

When we reach the *I.A.*, the picture is unchanged. Paris seduces Helen (71 f.) with his splendid raiment and radiant Phrygian opulence (cf. also 580 f.). It is noteworthy that in these plays it is only Spartan women whom Euripides represents as succumbing to foreign luxury. The men, as we shall see, are treated quite differently. When Tyndareus in a memorable line (*Or.* 485) accuses Menelaus of having gone native because of his prolonged absence abroad (βεβαρβάρωσαι, χρόνιος ὦν ἐν βαρβάροις), he is referring explicitly to his disregard of Greek traditional ideas on pollution.

I have already dealt with some aspects of Menelaus' character which, subject to one major qualification, will be found to show remarkable consistency throughout the plays. But there are some other aspects to which I want to draw attention. The first is his inflated sense of his own importance, which is most evident in the *Andromache*. He boasts (312 f.) of his own superior good sense compared with that of Andromache, and then threatens to murder her child unless she leaves the sanctuary of the altar. This elicits from her (319 f.) a denunciation of Reputation, (865a). Could Troy really have been taken by so mean-minded a general? Menelaus declares (368 f.) that Hermione's marital problems are more worth fighting over than the capture of Troy, which provokes the rejoinder (387): ὦ μεγάλα πράσων αἰτίας σμικρᾶς πέρι. Menelaus is someone who makes a great commotion over a trivial issue. Andromache facing death (459 f.) refuses defiantly to flatter him: he may be great in Sparta, but so was she in Troy – fortunes can change. Later (693 f.) Peleus accuses Menelaus (and also (703 f.) Agamemnon) of taking all the credit for the victory on himself as general, while ignoring the toil of the common soldier which actually achieved it. The main tendency of these passages is to devalue military success, particularly that of the Spartans, as a criterion for estimating human worth.

A similar picture of Menelaus is painted in the early scenes of the *Helen*. Arriving on the stage shipwrecked and in disarray, he begins by boasting (393 f.) how the naval expedition he led

against Troy was the greatest ever, and how the troops willingly accepted him as general. He disdains (414 f.) to confront the local inhabitants in his bedraggled condition for fear of losing face on account of his former prosperity. He will not run away (500 f.) from the gatekeeper's menaces. No one could be so barbaric as to deny him food, considering his famous exploit in burning Troy. He will wait for the ruler to come out of his residence. If he proves to have a savage disposition, Menelaus will return stealthily to the wreck of his ship. Otherwise, for one king to beg from another is really the last straw, but one must live. I shall return to the deglamorization of Menelaus in this play; but in the *Orestes* he struts on to the stage (348 f.) with great arrogance, and at 1532 *Orestes* speaks contemptuously of his shoulder-length fair hair, with which he seeks to overawe people. The growing of long hair by the Spartans for this purpose is said by Xenophon (*Lac. Pol.* XI 3) to have been instituted by Lycurgus. *Orestes* bars the door against Menelaus (1567 f.), and describes him as towering in his own self-confidence. At *I.A.* 381 f. Agamemnon draws attention to his bloodshot eyes as he breathes out his fury uncontrollably.

I have given examples of Menelaus' brutality, his quickness of temper, and his propensity to bluster and to bully people who are weaker than himself, especially slaves and women. But he is also depicted as weak and cowardly when facing real dangers. At *Rh.* 174 f., if genuine, Dolon rejects the idea that Menelaus or the Locrian Ajax as slaves would be a suitable reward for his spying: well cared-for hands are no good for farming. Certainly agricultural labour was thought beneath the dignity of Spartiates. At *Andr.* 456 f. Andromache claims that Hector often made Menelaus seem like a poor sailor on the battlefield. He can play the terrifying warrior in front of a woman, and even kill her, but she will not be intimidated. It is to be noted that the words γοργὸς ὀπλίτης ('terrifying warrior') which she uses (458) of Menelaus recur (1123) to describe the magnificent figure of Neoptolemus standing on the altar at Delphi and holding at bay his treacherous and sacrilegious opponents. A lot is made by

Euripides in this play and elsewhere, as I have already indicated, of the contrast between Thessalians and Spartans to the disadvantage of the latter. Thessalian cities were long-standing allies of Athens. At 590 f. Peleus accuses Menelaus of not being a man at all if he couldn't protect his wife from being abducted by a barbarian. And she wasn't worth fighting for anyway. He goes on to claim (616 f.) that Menelaus was the only man who came home from Troy unwounded. The scholiast expends fruitless ingenuity in trying to reconcile this with Homer's account (*Il.* IV 139 f.), where he is wounded by an arrow of Pandarus; and Stephens regards the claim as obviously unfair because of the two lines that immediately follow. But I take these to mean simply that Menelaus had fine weapons in fine containers which he brought back unused from Troy, not that he used none while there. At any rate, within the context of this play Peleus' assertion is not challenged. He later taunts Menelaus (627 f.) with having failed to kill his treacherous wife after the capture of Troy, when she displayed her breasts to him, because he is a slave to passion, ἥσων πεφυκὼς Κύπριδος. At the end of the scene (745 f.) Peleus describes him as a shadow adversary, nothing but mouth; old as he is (762 f.) he has only to look such a man in the eye to rout him. When Orestes asks (917 f.) whether Menelaus was defeated by the hand of the old man, Hermione who was not present replies falsely that it was out of reverence for Peleus (αἰδοῖ γὰρ) that her father withdrew and left her alone. Xenophon (*Lac. Pol.* V 5) contrasts the veneration felt by Spartans for the experience of old age with the way in which in other cities young men associate for the most part only with one another (cf. also *Hdt.* II 80 1). Elsewhere (*Lac. Pol.* III 5) he describes how Lycurgus inculcated a strong sense of αἰδώς into Spartan males, and adds (*Lac. Pol.* II 11) that exceptional reverence for those in authority was felt by Spartan men and boys. In fact the Spartans regarded αἰδώς as a god (*Xen. Symp.* VIII 35).

At *El.* 1041 f. we are invited to consider what would have been the correct course of action if Menelaus had been secretly abducted (ἥρπαστο) instead of Helen. The use of the same verb so

often applied to Helen suggests no mere kidnapping, but conjures up the rather startling picture of Menelaus as the victim of homosexual rape, the most extreme instance of Euripides' sustained campaign to humiliate the Spartan hero. At *Tr.* 890 f. Menelaus is warned by Hecuba not to look on Helen's destructive beauty, or it will take away his desire to kill her. And sure enough, by the end of the scene (1046 f.) we see him gradually withdrawing from his original intention, until (1100 f.) the Chorus are able to feel confident that their prayer that he will not return home to Sparta with her is vain. At *Hel.* 441 f. Menelaus is clearly overawed by the old woman who keeps the palace gate, and by 453 he is asking miserably, 'Where is my famous army?' after which he promptly bursts into tears. Fortunately she has a soft spot for Greeks, but he is made to appear utterly ridiculous.

In the *Orestes* Menelaus at first agrees to help the stricken hero, who holds high expectations of him (52 f., 448). Like his wife Helen (75 f.), he is willing to speak to Orestes, and declines to treat him as a polluted outcast, blaming Apollo (416 f.) for what has happened, and defending his own supportive attitude (481 f.) against the criticisms of Tyndareus. But subsequently (632 f.) he turns away from Orestes, being intimidated by the fierceness of Tyndareus. The falsity of his friendship is clearly contrasted with the conduct of Pylades, a true friend; and I cannot agree with those (including Willink, 1986, e.g. on lines 459–69) who believe that there is anything to be said in justification of his attitude, or that he is making a rational or morally defensible choice in favouring Tyndareus his kinsman-by-marriage as against Orestes his blood relative. When faced with a difficult decision which requires courage to implement, he vacillates, as in *Andromache* when considering killing a suppliant, or in *Troades* when wondering whether to kill his wife, or in *Helen* when seeking help for himself and his shipwrecked companions. In all four plays he is outfaced by a stronger personality, and though in *Andromache* it leads him to take a morally correct decision, his motives for doing so are not creditable. His change of mind in the *I.A.* is more complex and will be discussed later.

In all other cases he retreats in an evasive and disingenuous manner. He argues (*Or.* 688 f.) that he is powerless to win the Argives over by force of arms, which is not what he is being asked to do. But the language in which he speaks of the alternative does not suggest a resolute determination to use persuasion. No wonder Orestes says (717) that Menelaus is only fit to lead an army on behalf of a woman. Caution is his watchword (748); he is a strong man among women (754). When he has to deal with the hostage taking, Orestes is confident (1200 f.) that his tactics will be bluster followed by capitulation; and this turns out to be the case (1597 f.). Helen will call upon him for help in vain (1301); he will have abandoned her, just as he betrayed the son of the brother to whom he owed so much (647 f., 1228 f., 1462 f.).

Finally at *I.A.* 945, if genuine, Achilles states that in contrast with himself Menelaus is no real man, another comparison of Spartan with Thessalian. So we see Euripides constantly representing Menelaus exhibiting the vice which above all others contemporary Spartans would have regarded as most shameful. In wartime it is common to depict the enemy as stupid, incompetent and lacking in the most desirable moral qualities, notwithstanding manifest evidence to the contrary. I do not suggest that Euripides believed his own propaganda, but some cause which we cannot now discern must have led him to feel deeply embittered against the Spartans so as to portray their mythical king in such a hostile manner.

We have seen Menelaus depicted as arrogant, brutal, unscrupulous, deceitful, treacherous, cowardly, weak and uxorious, which goes beyond the normal process of deglamorization to which most other epic heroes are subjected by Euripides. But is there a positive side to his character? I have already mentioned *I.T.* 928 f., where a neutral attitude is taken towards his regency in Argos; and he has to be shown as behaving to some extent positively towards Orestes in the early part of his name play so that we can get a proper sense of betrayal later on. But there are two other examples which merit closer consideration. The first is Menelaus' repentance at *I.A.* 479 f.; faced with the collapse of

his brother's resolution, he retracts his former words and advises Agamemnon not to sacrifice his daughter. He even acknowledges (487 f.) that he would be getting a bad bargain if he tried to recover Helen and destroyed his brother in the process. And he proposes (494 f.) to disband the army. But his reconciliation comes too late, and his repentance is ineffective because it is clear after Agamemnon's speech (442 f.) that Menelaus is going to get what he originally wanted. I do not go so far as to suggest that he is insincere. Agamemnon's words (506 f.) thanking him for acting contrary to expectation seem to bely this. And so does the zeal with which he launches into an alternative strategy, proposing with characteristic unscrupulousness (522 f.) to kill anyone who stands in his path. But his repentance never becomes public, and the attitude of other characters towards him remains unchanged. Thus when the slave (891 f.) explains to Clytemnestra what has been happening, he has no hesitation in naming Menelaus as the cause of all their troubles. Achilles, as we have seen (945 f.), regards Menelaus as a coward; but when he in turn tries courageously to achieve what Menelaus had merely suggested, namely to win over the army, he fails (1349 f.), as he must fail again with his revised plan to avert the sacrifice (1427 f.). Even Agamemnon (1269 f.) tells Iphigenia that he is not sacrificing her to gratify Menelaus, but for what he rhetorically describes as a greater cause, Greek freedom. And it is implicit in his words that Menelaus' wishes are what they were at the beginning of the play. We cannot know what his behaviour was at the time of the sacrifice itself, and whether it contrasted unfavourably with that of Achilles, because the genuine part of the text breaks off at 1510. However, I agree with Luschnig (1988: 47) in believing that in this play the war is meant to be regarded as unjust, and that Menelaus' change of heart at 479 f. is to be connected with the fact that one of the things Euripides is trying to tell us is that, once war hysteria is unleashed into a community, it becomes virtually impossible to restrain it, even if individuals who had an interest in prosecuting the war are prepared to waive their supposed rights.

The second major example of Menelaus appearing in a positive light occurs in the *Helen*. The exigencies of the legend make it very difficult to decide which elements of Euripides' portrayal of Helen relate to her as a Spartan woman rather than as a panhellenic heroine. Her beauty is both attractive and a dangerous source of corruption, but in this it resembles nearly all human beauty in Euripides, whether male or female. Euripides did not invent the story which makes Helen responsible, though not uniquely, for the Trojan War and for the destruction and suffering which it caused to both sides; nor was he the first to add the extra twist whereby Helen remains faithful in Egypt, while Greeks and Trojans fight over her phantom. The mythical war is rooted in questions of personal morality, and not in political or commercial issues, so that it is impossible to draw any inferences from the role of Helen as to whether Euripides thought that Sparta was responsible for the outbreak of the war. Besides, *Telephus* and almost certainly the *Men of Scyros* which pre-date 431 bc seem indistinguishable from later plays in the way they regard Helen as the cause of the mythical war (fr. 722, 681a).

It would be possible to imagine a play in which Helen spends seventeen years of fidelity and vilification in Egypt only to discover, when Menelaus is restored to her, that he was not worth waiting for. But Euripides did not write it, because, although the first part of the play seems to be pointing towards just this conclusion, the character of Menelaus undergoes a transformation after the recognition scene, and particularly after her oath (835 f.) to remain faithful to him or die. The first indication comes at 716 f., where the messenger declares that both husband and wife have had a share in suffering, she through words, and he through zeal in fighting. This does not suggest the hero who returned without a scratch (*Andr.* 616 f.). When flight is suggested as his best course, Menelaus says (*Hel.* 806 f.) that he will not abandon the wife for whose sake he sacked a city. That would make him a coward and unworthy of Troy. He will if necessary (842 f.) kill them both on the tomb of Proteus, but first he will fight for his wife against Theoclymenus, or whoever else.

He will not put to shame the glory he won at Troy, or earn the reproach of the Greeks after all the experiences he had there. He will not cringe before Theonoe (947 f.), as he did before the gatekeeper. That too would be cowardly and unworthy of Troy. In a bizarre invocation of Hades (969 f.) he reminds the gods of the many bodies which fell by his sword for Helen's sake. To shed tears (991 f.) would show him as pitiable rather than a man of action (contrast 456 f.). If he must die, it will not be ingloriously. At 1491 f. his return home as a victor is assured. All the passages I have so far quoted could, if we felt so inclined, be explained away as bravado; and the artificiality of some of the rhetoric certainly suggests that they should not be taken at face value. But as the escape plot gathers momentum, it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain such a view. Even after his prayer for safety (1584 f.), an ironic reading of Menelaus' character might still be possible. But faced at last with real danger he behaves as a Spartan should. He incites his men to battle (1591 f.), and is joined in this (1602 f.) by his wife from the sternsheets, who urges them to remember their Trojan glory and demonstrate it to the barbarians (cf. Neoptolemus' Trojan leap at Delphi, *Andr.* 1139 f.). Menelaus not only fights fiercely himself (1606 f.), but assists those of his comrades who are in distress, reminding us of Theseus (*Sup.* 707 f.) and Eteocles (*Ph.* 1095 f.). After his death (*Hel.* 1676 f.) he will be transported to the islands of the blest, as in Homer's account (*Od.* IV 561 f.), and there will be deification for Helen, just as at the end of the *Orestes*. How are we to explain the transformation of Menelaus in this play, or indeed of Helen in the *Orestes*?

The *Helen* is a particularly difficult play to interpret, and has been read in a great variety of ways. It was produced in March 412 BC shortly after the Sicilian disaster. But from the time of the Melian outrage and the resumption of serious warfare by Athens, there is a change in the way conflicts are presented by Euripides, and in particular a strong emphasis on the need for reconciliation, though (as in the *Phoenissae*) this is not always successfully achieved by mortals. But the gods can make the

oppressed in the moment of victory spare the life of one of their persecutors as in the *Antiope*, or unite the terrorist with his victims as in the *Orestes*. In our play Menelaus and Helen do not have to be reconciled with any of the other characters, but they do have to be reconciled with Greek public opinion, which sees them as culpably responsible for a war that has resulted in great and prolonged suffering (52 f., 72 f., 81, 109 f., 162 f., 1147 f.); so perhaps a contemporary gloss can be put on the end of the play, which should then be read as a call to Athens to forget past injuries and to be reconciled with the old foe. At any rate, 1151 f. contain an impassioned plea, more general than is found elsewhere in Euripides, for disputes to be resolved by verbal negotiation rather than through the folly of war. It would be attractive to suggest that a courageous Menelaus is as much a creature of fantasy as a chaste Helen, but I do not think that the play as a whole will bear this reading.

Besides Menelaus there is one other character who deserves our scrutiny as a possible vehicle for Euripides' anti-Spartan feeling: this is Tyndareus in the *Orestes*. He is announced as a Spartiate when he first comes on to the stage (457 f.). His pace is slow because of old age, and he is dressed in black with his head shaved in mourning for his daughter Clytemnestra. Orestes is immediately overcome (462 f.) by a sense of guilt and shame because of the affection with which his grandfather brought him up, just like one of the Dioscuri, and the cruel way he has paid him back for this. Tyndareus' first words on catching sight of Orestes (479 f.) express sheer horror, and he criticizes Menelaus for speaking to such a polluted man. He proclaims himself an upholder of the law (487, 503, 523 f.); but he is no Theseus (*Sup.* 429 f.) protecting the equal rights of all citizens against tyranny; and the dubious nature of his claim is reinforced by what the messenger later reports of other speakers in the assembly debate (891 f., 940 f.). He professes to be concerned to break the unending chain of retributive murders (508 f.), which is in itself commendable enough, and to put a stop to destructive brutality (524 f.). But when he finds that Orestes, unwilling to accept the

role of social outcast, speaks out in defence of what he has done, Tyndareus pledges himself (612 f.) to do all in his power to persuade the Argive assembly to condemn Orestes and Electra to death. And he is as good as his word (914 f.). He is a rigid traditionalist, uncompromising and unforgiving (513 f.). His adherence to the conventions of public behaviour in no way reflects his true feelings. In mourning for Clytemnestra, he is quick to tell us (471 f.) that he has just come from pouring a libation at her tomb; but in due course we learn (518 f.) that he hates both his daughters. And when he eventually deigns to address Orestes (526 f.), it is to terrify him by conjuring up an imaginary picture of his mother's death and by gloating over him as a victim of divine punishment. When the Dioscuri (*El.* 1244) say that Clytemnestra has her just deserts, but that Orestes was the unjust instrument for bringing this about, they are acknowledging the existence of a difficult moral dilemma. But when Tyndareus uses a similar argument (*Or.* 504 f.), it is merely to assert that Orestes is morally no better than his mother. Tyndareus is formidable and inflexible, and he has no difficulty in exerting his authority as an elder to bring Menelaus into line. Spartan strength is as repellent as Spartan weakness is ridiculous.

There are few significant references to Tyndareus outside the *Orestes*, and he is clearly not the same character. At *El.* 1018 f., Clytemnestra says that her father did not give her to Agamemnon so that she or her children should be killed by him. At *Hel.* 720 f. the messenger, on learning Helen's true identity, says that she has not after all put her aged father or the Dioscuri to shame or done the things that have made her notorious throughout Greece. *I.A.* 55 f. and 66 f. show Tyndareus as the cunning deviser of the oath to bind Helen's suitors into an offensive alliance against any future abductor; but Agamemnon condemns the oath (391 f.) as self-interested folly. At 1030 f. Achilles tells Clytemnestra not to bring shame on her father's house; Tyndareus is held in high regard among the Greeks, and does not deserve to have his name tarnished. He protected

Agamemnon as a suppliant (1153 f.), and gave him his daughter in marriage when her brothers, the Dioscuri, rode against him to avenge an earlier wrong committed by Agamemnon against her. The tendency of most of these passages is to show Tyndareus as a respected elder statesman, but I do not think they have any contemporary political significance.

Mention of the Dioscuri leads me on to my final point. These Spartan princes with their cult at Amyclae are almost always portrayed by Euripides in a favourable light. Their role as saviours of ships is stressed in the exodos of both the *Electra* and the *Helen*, where they appear in order to deliver the judgment of Zeus. They are implicitly critical of the dilatoriness or even the wisdom of higher gods (*Hel.* 1658 f., *El.* 1245 f., 1302), and they are protective towards their sisters who do not always deserve this. There are some other passages concerning the Dioscuri. *Electra* was originally betrothed to her uncle Castor (*El.* 312 f.). The brothers live among the stars (988 f.) and are honoured by mortals for their role as saviours. Both of his sisters are unworthy of Castor (1062 f.), despite their beauty. The Dioscuri reject the idea of human pollution (1292 f.), regarding Apollo as responsible for the matricide; but their power to intervene is limited. At *Tr.* 132 f. Helen is a disgrace to Castor and to Sparta generally. Hecuba denies her claim (998 f.) to have been forcibly abducted, on the ground that she sought no help from the Spartiates in general, or her brothers in particular (I am unconvinced by Scodel's proposed deletion (1980: 144) of these lines). At *I.T.* 272 f., the shipwrecked Orestes and Pylades are at first mistaken by the superstitious shepherd for the Dioscuri or some other divinities. At *Hel.* 137 f. two versions are offered to Helen of the fate of her brothers: either they have been changed into stars, the correct account, or they have committed suicide out of shame for her supposed conduct (cf. *Il.* III 241 f.), the account she actually believes (*Hel.* 284 f.). Their athletic prowess is emphasized (205 f.), particularly their horsemanship. They are invited (1495 f.) to come in their splendour and vindicate their sister's innocence. Finally (1642 f.) they

reconcile Theoclymenus to his sister and to the loss of Helen. She is to share in their task of saving ships (*Or.* 1636 f., 1686 f.).

All these passages relate to the Dioscuri after their death and deification, but there is a negative side to their character: in their lifetime they were notorious rapists, adopting a different standard from when their sisters are the intended victims of others. The reference to the Leucippides (*Hel.* 1465 f.) does not make it clear what version of the legend Euripides meant his audience to recall, and there is no mention of the part played by the Dioscuri. But in the *Rhadamanthys* (where the role of the titular hero is similar to that normally played by Leucippus), it appears from the closing words of the plot summary that both brothers were killed in single combat after an attempt to abduct the daughters of Rhadamanthys; though honours in the form of a heroic cult will be instituted for Castor and Pollux by their sister Helen. It is not clear whether their rivals were as usual the Apharidae, but the daughters too died and were deified. This story of the Dioscuri seems very discreditable, but the authenticity of the play was disputed in antiquity, and if genuine it may be very early. Setting this play aside, therefore, I would see the Dioscuri in Euripides as representing an ideal of Spartan manhood which in his view contemporary Spartans failed to live up to. This would give an added appropriateness to their appearance at the end of the *Electra*, where Helen is innocent and Menelaus uncriticized, and of the *Helen*, in which Euripides gives us his least unattractive portrayal of living Spartans.

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II

LACOMICA: ARISTOPHANES AND THE SPARTANS

David Harvey

'Nice pair of tits you've got there', remarks the Athenian girl Kalonike to the Spartan Lampito at the beginning of Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* (83), and this outburst of admiration may well serve to set the scene for the whole of my discourse. My intention is to examine the passages in Aristophanes that refer to the Spartans, in order to see how he chose to portray the enemy to a mass audience of Athenian citizens in wartime. For all the extant plays of Aristophanes were written at a time when Athens was at war with Sparta.¹ We might expect, therefore, to find a great deal of vilification and abuse of the enemy. My main point is that we find nothing of the kind. I shall look first at what Aristophanes says about Spartan products; then the way in which he depicts the appearance, character and occupations of the Spartans; and finally their institutions, their history and their role in current affairs.²

I

Let us begin with trivia; some characteristic Spartan products.

In the *Farmers* of 424, we have a joke about Lakonian figs. Someone, presumably an Attic farmer, says, 'I plant all varieties of figs except Lakonian: that one's hostile and tyrannical. It wouldn't be so small, if it weren't so anti-democratic.' Lakonian figs were in fact among the best Greek varieties; perhaps a pun

on *oligoí* = small and *oligoí* = oligarchs lurks beneath the surface.³ In the *Knights* Kleon denounces the Sausage-seller for exporting certain products to Peloponnesian triremes in terms that involve a pun on soup (*zōmos*) and ships' cables (*hypozōmata*). No doubt he is alluding to the famous Spartan black broth or 'bloody soup' (*bapha* or *haimatia*); one of its few admirers was Adolf Hitler.⁴ It is a weary joke on the Athenian comic stage that women were excessively addicted to wine. The Spartan Lampito is just as attracted by it as the Athenian ladies. Kalonike proposes that the women should swear never to dilute wine with water. 'Och!' says Lampito, 'I can scarcely say how much I approve of that oath'; her Spartan qualities are momentarily forgotten for the sake of a stock joke.⁵ In general, however, there are very few allusions in Aristophanes to Spartan food and drink. He tells us virtually nothing about the Spartiate diet, except that Athenian Lakonizers went hungry (B 1281–2).

Philokleon in *Wasps* is unwilling to put on Spartan shoes, 'especially', he adds, 'as one of my toes is exceedingly anti-Lakonian.'⁶ It is clear from the context – Philokleon is being dressed in posh new clothes, so that he can appear in polite society – that Lakonian shoes were something of a luxury. Aristophanes mentions them in six other passages, which make it clear that they were shoes for men only.⁷ Distinctive 'Lakonian' footwear remained fashionable for at least three centuries among Spartiates themselves, foreign sympathizers and other Greeks, being made presumably both inside Lakonia and elsewhere.⁸

The Lakonian key is mentioned only once, in the *Thesmophoriazousai*, where a woman complains that she cannot get at the larder and the wine: 'our husbands carry the keys around with them', she says, 'secret and exceptionally horrible keys, some sort of Lakonian things with three teeth.' The scholiast comments, rather uselessly, 'Lakonian keys are famous'; it seems that they locked a door from the outside, not inside, and presumably the object was simply a key of the type that we are used to, as opposed to a bolt or bar.⁹ Other groups whom these keys may have been intended to control are helots and aliens.¹⁰

In the *Ekklesiazousai* (405) a remedy for eye-trouble is proposed: the recipe includes Lakonian spurge, *tithumallon*.¹¹ Spurge, euphorbia, is a highly poisonous plant, yet Galen recommends it for various ailments, though he warns his readers that it will blister the skin. It certainly sounds like a drastic remedy.

So far little of any significance has emerged: merely antiquarian trifles.

II

Next, the physical appearance of Aristophanes' Spartans. Nothing is said of the famous long hair cultivated by male Spartiates, though Spartan sympathizers in other Greek states are mocked for it (W 466; B 1280–3). Similarly, Lakonizers who do not trim their beards are ridiculed in the *Wasps* (474–6), and sure enough, when the Spartan ambassadors arrive in the *Lysistrata*, they are said to be 'trailing (*helkontes*) their beards' (L 1072). Every year the ephors ordered the Spartiates to 'shave their moustaches and obey the laws'¹²; in compensation, it seems, they let their beards grow long. They had flashing eyes, if we may deduce that much from the phrase 'flashing-eyed monkeys' applied to them in the *Peace* (1065). The *Babylonians* contained the word *ōtokataxin*, 'breakage of the ear' (fr. 100 [98]). Ears get broken in violent sports, such as boxing, and we read in two passages of Plato of Lakonizers with broken ears.¹³ Kock ingeniously and surely rightly connected *ōtokataxin* with another word preserved from this play, *lakedaimoniazō*. Philokleon in *Wasps* 1169 is urged to swagger along daintily, *diasalakōnison*: as this comes immediately after the joke about Lakonian shoes, there may be reference here to the Spartiates' swaggering gait, a pun on *salakōn*, 'vulgarly ostentatious' and *lakōn*.

Thus Aristophanes' jokes about physical characteristics are generally aimed not so much at Spartiates as at their imitators who are mocked for their long hair, broken ears and insolent

gait. As far as we can tell from the text of *Lysistrata*, the Spartans in that play differ visually from the Athenians in only one respect, those ludicrously long beards. Of course the mask-makers and costume-makers may have made them look far sillier than our text suggests; but it does not look as if Aristophanes wanted to represent them as exceptionally grotesque, ugly or villainous.

If we turn to the women, we are greeted with an exceptionally pleasing sight: they really are terrific. As soon as Lampito appears, *Lysistrata* exclaims (78–80): ‘Greetings: my goodness, sweetie, you’re positively glowing with beauty! ... What a splendid complexion!; your whole body exudes health and strength (*sphrigai*).’ Sparta had always been renowned for its beautiful women: indeed, Homer refers to *Lakedaimona kalligunaika*. But Lampito was clearly something special. The notoriously revealing Spartan dress will no doubt have made her charms particularly easy to appreciate.¹⁴ (We must, alas, remind ourselves that her part will have been played by a male.) The lovely lines in praise of the beauty of the Spartan maidens at the end of the play echo the praise of Lampito’s beauty at the beginning:

Let us praise Sparta, where...the girls, like ponies, leap along by the Eurotas, raising the dust with the rapid movements of their feet; and their hair streams out like that of maenads at play, whirling their thyrsi; and at the head of the chorus is the beautiful chaste daughter of Leda (1306–15).

III

How about the character of the Spartans? The charge that is brought against them most frequently in Aristophanes is that they are deceitful. Thus in the *Acharnians* (308) they are described as men who respect no altar, no handshake, no oath – in other words, none of the constituent parts of a treaty. Similarly, in the *Peace* there is a whole series of images which represent the Spartans as animal tricksters: monkeys, foxes, crabs, hedgehogs.

Elsewhere, it is said that they are no more to be trusted than a gaping wolf.¹⁵

What I have suppressed, however, is the context of these accusations, and the characters to whom they are attributed. In the *Acharnians* it is the fanatical, warlike chorus, who are opposed to the plans of the hero. In the *Peace*, it is the oracle-monger Hierokles, who is depicted as a thorough nuisance. In the *Lysistrata*, it is the chorus of old men, again opposed to plans for peace. In other words, all these allegations that the Spartans are untrustworthy are put into the mouths of unsympathetic characters. Furthermore, these unsympathetic characters are always persuaded to change their mind.

There are two passages that might be thought to disrupt this pattern. In *Lysistrata* (1269–70) the Lakonian sings ‘Let’s give up the wiliness of foxes’; but if there *is* any bitterness here, it is undercut first by the fact that it is *self*-mockery, and secondly by the general atmosphere of good humour that prevails after the two sides have been reconciled. In the *Peace* (622–3), Hermes says that the allied states of the Athenian empire bribed the most important men (*tous megistous*) at Sparta: and because these men were *aischrokerdeis*, lovers of evil gain, and *dieirōnoxenoi*, treacherous towards outsiders, they disgracefully threw out Peace and snatched up War instead. These two characteristics, *aischrokerdeia* and treachery, are linked by Euripides in the famous denunciation of Sparta in the *Andromache* (445–53), which Aristophanes may well have had in mind. But whereas Euripides’ *Andromache* depicts *all* Spartans as tainted with these vices at all times, Aristophanes confines his criticism to the behaviour of a few, the *megistoi* – presumably the kings and ephors, possibly members of the *gerousia* – on one single occasion.

The Spartans are not represented as men obsessed with military matters. The only possible allusion to this is in the *Lysistrata* (1236–8), when the Athenian says: ‘If anyone [i.e. any Spartan] at the party sang the song of Telamon when he should have sung the Kleitagora song, we perjured ourselves and said it was fine’. So some Spartan made the mistake of singing a warlike

song at the peace celebrations. But the Athenians did not care: they just laughed it off.

A single word in the *Lysistrata* (170) gives us a momentary insight into the Spartan attitude towards the Athenian *dēmos*: Lampito asks how anyone can possibly persuade the Athenian *rhuacheton* not to play the fool. Ancient lexicographers explain that this word means *ho rheōn ochetos*, a flowing drainpipe. It sounds as if she is calling them sewage. None of the Athenian women objects.

One final characterizing adjective: towards the end of *Lysistrata* (1226), after the Athenians have met the Spartans at a party, one of them comes out saying: 'How *nice* they are!', or 'How *charming!*' (*charientes*).

So there we have it. A few prominent men at Sparta were greedy and treacherous in 431; otherwise the Spartans are charming, and not really perfidious after all.

IV

Next, Spartan occupations and preoccupations. There is one interesting detail concerning military practice. Lampito says that as soon as her husband comes home from war, he has to put the *porpax* – the detachable armband – back on his shield and rush off again. So Aristophanes knows that the Spartans detached the *porpax* from their shields when at home. The reason is given by Kritias again: as with the key, it was fear of an attack from the helots.¹⁶

As for the athletics, there's an allusion to boxing, and the Spartan herald uses a sporting metaphor to describe the unsporting behaviour of the Spartan women: 'Lampito started it; then all the others, like racers from the same starting-gate (*hysplēx*), repulsed their husbands from their most erogenous zones' (a polite translation).¹⁷

What amused Aristophanes and his audience most, of course, was the Spartan practice of allowing girls to take part in

athletics, which Peleus in Euripides' *Andromache* thought so disgusting. It is this that accounts for the superb physical condition of Lampito: Lysistrata ends her admiring remarks with the phrase: 'You look strong enough to strangle a bull!' 'Yes, of course', replies Lampito; 'I take exercise and I jump up to my bottom.' The scholiast explains that this means 'to jump so as to touch the buttocks with the heels', and the name of the exercise was *bibasis*. We have what surely must be a picture of this activity on a Corinthian vase of c. 580 BC which shows a team of seven young men, the first of whom is doing the rump-jump while the others wait their turn.¹⁸ It is striking that Lampito is still doing the same exercises as were fashionable in the Peloponnese over a hundred and fifty years earlier: an interesting insight into Spartan conservatism. Lampito's athleticism emerges again a few lines later, when she exclaims 'I'd gladly go up to the top of Mount Taygetos, if there was a chance of seeing peace!' 'No easy task', remarks the commentator Rogers; its 'abrupt and dizzy precipices' rise to no less than 7,874 feet.

Aristophanes makes several jokes about Spartan homosexuality, and, as we might expect, they are not particularly refined.¹⁹ The Spartan ambassador who arrives in a state of sexual arousal is told that Lysistrata ought to be summoned. 'OK', he replies, 'and Lysistratos too, if you like'. Part of the joke is that for an erect Spartan a man will do as well as a woman. All the other jokes refer rather more explicitly to anal intercourse. When the beautiful Diallage, Reconciliation, is brought naked onto the stage at the end of the *Lysistrata*, the part of her body that the Spartan admires is her anus (*prōktos*): 'unspeakably beautiful!', he exclaims. And when negotiations start, and the Spartan demands her *egkuklon*, 'circular thing', we are still in the same general area. A little later the Athenian, using a familiar *double entendre*, says 'I'm going to take off my clothes and do some ploughing'. The Spartan responds with: 'By the McZeuses, I'm going to collect some dung.' The Athenian's desire for frontal intercourse is thus agriculturally contrasted with the Spartan's longing for proktal intercourse. Finally, we have the isolated

word *lakōnizein* from the second *Thesmophoriazousai*, fr. 358 (338, 907); Hesychios and others explain this as *paidikōis chrēsthai*, to have intercourse with a beloved boy.²⁰

Five jokes about Spartan homosexuality, then. But we must put them in perspective. There are dozens of jokes about Athenian homosexuals, and indeed about Athenian sexual practices of all imaginable and unimaginable kinds: enough to fill a book, as indeed they have done.²¹ To take just one example, in *Clouds* (1096–1100) the majority of the Athenians in the audience are alleged to be *euryprōktoi*, men whose anuses have become enlarged as the result of frequent homosexual intercourse. So the jokes about the Spartans' sexual predilections should not be seen as exceptionally insulting.

The last of the Spartan interests to which Aristophanes refers is their music. At the end of the *Lysistrata* (1242 and 1245), the Spartan's song is accompanied by an instrument which he calls *ta phyhatēria*, and the Athenian *hai physallidai*. What is it? No classical commentator offers the slightest help. But Kathleen Schlesinger identified it in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* as long ago as 1910. It seems to be a bladder-pipe, an instrument popular in the Middle Ages. The reed is enclosed by an animal bladder; the player blows through a mouthpiece into the bladder, which acts as a reservoir of wind like the bag of a bagpipe. Sometimes it is not straight, but curved. Sometimes it has two pipes – note the plural form in Aristophanes – one of which served as a drone. In mediaeval times it was used at court; it survives today as a toy, and an ordinary rubber balloon has replaced the bladder. The context suggests that it was a peculiarly Spartan instrument. With its drone and wind-sack, it must have been very much like the bagpipes. 'The fascinating timbre' of a modern reconstruction, writes one scholar, 'reminds one strongly of the untrained voice of an old man.'²² At the very end of the play, a Spartiate sings another lyric, praising the choruses that the girls dance by the Eurotas in honour of the gods: in other words, *partheneia*. There is no ridicule here, only local colour which is provided by the instrument, the type of dance (*dipodia*), the dialect and, at

the conclusion, the allusion to the *partheneia* and to Helen the *choragos*.²³ The song itself (above, p. 38) is full of grace and charm.

V

Few insults about Spartan occupations, then, and some admiration. How about Spartan institutions? A couple of remarks are relevant to the Spartan social system. In *Peace* (625) Hermes says that when the leaders of the Spartans embarked on war, their gains meant suffering for the farmers. What farmers: the helots (state serfs) or the free *perioikoi*? It has recently been argued that Aristophanes is deliberately and misleadingly representing the peasants of Lakonia as a homogeneous social group comparable with the peasants of Attika. In that case he is assimilating men of a very different status, helots and *perioikoi*, for the sake of a false parallelism.²⁴ It is more likely, in my opinion, that he could not care less about the helots, and is thinking only of the *perioikoi*.

Again, when Lysistrata (L 1141–4) reminds the Spartans of the help given by Athens when ‘Messene weighed on them, and Poseidon’s earthquake at the same time’, the fact that the inhabitants of Messene had been reduced to serfdom again is glossed over: one would never know that this had been a helot revolt. Then Kimon arrived, she says, and ‘saved the whole of Lakadaimon’. That is untrue, and besides, those who were ‘saved’ were in fact only the Spartiates and *perioikoi*; when Lysistrata says ‘the whole of Lakadaimon’ she ignores the helots completely, just as Hermes had done.

The other allusion to the helots is hidden in the *Knights* (1225), where Demos says to the Sausage-seller: ‘But I crowned you and gave you gifts.’ Demos makes this remark in Doric, and the best sense that can be made out of the somewhat confused scholia and other testimonia is that it is a quotation from Eupolis’ play *Helots*, in which a helot is complaining that Poseidon has failed to protect him. Aristophanes would seem, then, to think that the betrayal of helots is good for a laugh.²⁵

Aristophanes also alludes to the driving out of undesirable aliens, *xenēlasiai* (B 1012–13), and to a few other Spartiate specialities: the famous purple cloak (L 1140), for example, and the *kraspeda*, the woollen tassels that fringed its border (W 475–6). These are affected by Lakonizers, as are the *skytalia* mentioned in *Birds* (1283), which are cudgels. More problematic is the *skytalē* in the *Lysistrata* (991–2). The Spartan herald has arrived with a message and an erection. ‘You’ve got an erection, you dirty old man’, says an Athenian by way of greeting. The herald denies it, and says that the thing is a *skytala Lakōnika*. ‘In that case,’ the Athenian replies, ‘I’ve got a *skytalē Lakōnikē* too.’ Just what this object was has been the subject of much discussion. The general belief is that it was a way of conveying secret messages.²⁶ Thus, for example, some say that the herald is pretending to be carrying a letter with peace terms from Sparta to the Athenian people. But it would be senseless to do that in code. The truth is staring at us in Aristophanes. If a *skytalion* in *Birds* is a Spartan cudgel, in a diminutive form, then a Spartan *skytalē* should be a large cudgel; which fits the context perfectly.

VI

In *Lysistrata*, Lampito, the herald and ambassadors all speak in Lakonian.²⁷ How accurately does Aristophanes reproduce this dialect? This question raises problems of method.²⁸ In the first place, Aristophanes’ own script will have been written in the Attic alphabet, and regularized at some later (Hellenistic?) date into standard Ionic spelling. Thus we should not, for example, give Aristophanes credit for ending his Lakonian infinitives in *–en* instead of Attic *–ein*, since in the Attic alphabet both will have been written identically *–en*. In the process of Ionicization, it is conceivable that some learned editor may have tidied away any details of Lakonian that Aristophanes got wrong, although major changes seem unlikely. At a later stage, copyists were understandably thrown into confusion by the outlandish dialect, and

where they go astray editors have differed on whether to print pure Lakonian, or, on the assumption that Aristophanes must have made concessions to his audience, to print modified forms that are closer to Attic. But despite these differences of principle, a general consensus seems to have been reached, so that our task is not impossible, even though occasionally we may not be able to say precisely what form Aristophanes wrote. There are two types of Lakonian utterance in the play, the iambics spoken by Lampito and the herald, which represent everyday speech, and the high-flown poetic lyrics at the end; but this makes no difference to the linguistic forms which the poet uses, which remain consistent throughout.

Briefly,²⁹ instead of eta we get long alpha; instead of zeta, double delta. Where Attic has theta, Aristophanes gives us sigma; Athenians pronounced theta as in *coathanger*, whereas Spartans pronounced it, as van Leeuwen (on L 81) puts it, *ut Britanni sonum 'th' in verbo 'to think'* [as Englishmen pronounce 'th' in 'think']; clearly Aristophanes is notating a strange sound with the nearest consonant at his disposal.³⁰ Sigma between two vowels is represented as an aspirate (*paha* for *pasa*, *Mōha* for *Mousa*, etc.). Verbs have first person plurals in *-omes*, third persons in *-nti*. Nouns with alpha stems have genitive plurals in *-an*; nouns with omicron have accusative plurals in *-ōs*. The article becomes *to*, *tai*, etc. Pronouns include *hames*, *hume*. Prepositions suffer apocope: that is, we get *kat* for *kata*, *par* for *para*, etc.; also *poti* for *pros*. *Hoka* and *poka* replace *hote* and *pote*; *ka* is used for Attic *an*, *ai* for *ei* and *ga* for *ge*. Oaths are sworn with *ou* and the accusative (*ou ton Di*) or *nai* with the accusative (*nai tō siō*, by Kastor and Pollux, which recurs with comic frequency). Speakers often say *oiō*, either 'I think' or an interjection. Instead of *ethelō* we have *lō*, which can be declined from the instances in *Lysistrata*: *lō*, *lēis*, *lēi*, *lōmes*, *lēte*. Instead of *legō* we have *mythizō*, or rather *musiddō*, frequently. Furthermore, there are a number of words peculiar to the Spartan vocabulary: *gerōchia*, (*gerōhia*), i.e. gerousia; *kala*, ships; *kursanios*, young man; *lissanios*, my good man; *pladdiaō*, to talk nonsense; *ō polychareida*, my very sweetest

one, used in speaking to men that one does not know very well; *rhuacheton*, rabble; *hyssax*, cunt; *chaios*, noble. The list might be extended.

This is a remarkable feat of mimicry on Aristophanes' part. For he has got all these divergences from Attic, and all these peculiar phrases, exactly right.³¹ It is not a matter of someone coming on to the stage with a funny voice and making an approximate shot at the accent. How did he acquire this expertise? At Athens he might have spoken to some Spartan ambassadors, or after 425 to some of the captives from Pylos. More plausibly, he could have travelled. The date of his birth is not firmly established, but must fall between 457 and 445;³² so he could have gone to Sparta in his teens, or during the uneasy years following the Peace of Nikias. The tradition that Aristophanes was in some way connected with Aigina,³³ does not help us. There they spoke Argolic, which, although Doric, was not close enough to Lakonian to have served as a model. The significance of Aigina in the present context may rather lie in its geographical position as a stepping-stone between Athens and the Peloponnese. There is also, of course, the strong possibility that Aristophanes studied written texts, and certainly a knowledge of Alkman and other Spartan lyric poets would have helped him to compose the songs that conclude *Lysistrata*. But it would have provided little guidance for his colloquial dialogue.

VII

What of Aristophanes' presentation of events in Spartan history? The earliest is the expulsion of the tyrant Hippias from Athens. *Lysistrata* reminds the Athenians of how the Spartans helped them on that occasion: 'they slew many Thessalians and friends and allies of Hippias; and fighting as your only allies they freed you', etc. (L 1150–6). The 'many' Thessalians were in fact just over forty, but otherwise this account is quite accurate (cf. Hdt. 5 64). And that is what is so odd about it. For the majority of

Athenians, as Thucydides (1 20 2) tells us, were under the impression that the men who had freed them from tyranny were Harmodios and Aristogeiton. It was they who were honoured with statues and so forth; there was even a law forbidding people to make dirty jokes about them.³⁴ So Aristophanes is presenting the version which gives the credit to the Spartans before an audience of which the majority believed that it was all the work of a couple of noble Athenians.

However, Kleomenes returned a few years later, and the chorus of old men remembers the occasion when the Spartan king was besieged by Athenian hoplites: they depict him emerging from the siege 'wearing a tiny little cloak, filthy dirty, hair all over him, not having had a bath for six years' (L 274–80). The chronology is inexact – he was besieged for two days, not six years; but, as Rogers says, that's near enough for comedy. What a contrast with Aristophanes' attitude to the Spartan kings of his own day! Not only does he refrain from presenting them as grotesque, ludicrous or despicable figures: he never even mentions them.

The great events of the Persian wars are praised in the song the Spartan sings at the end of *Lysistrata* (1138–44): the Athenians, like boars, launched themselves against the Persian fleet and were victorious; and Leonidas, likewise compared with a boar, led the Spartans. Aristophanes dwells on the foam and the numbers of the Persians, and then changes the subject. No one would guess that the battle of Thermopylai had been a Spartan defeat.

I have already mentioned Lysistrata's curious account of the helot revolt: Kimon marched out and saved Lakonia. She ignores the important fact that the Spartans soon sent Kimon packing. Indeed, the rift that opened between Athens and Sparta as a result had disastrous consequences, and destroyed the very ideal that Aristophanes admired so much.³⁵ He must have been uncomfortably aware of this. Why then did he choose this incident? It looks as if he could not think of any other example of Athens helping Sparta. Of course, Aristophanes is

not writing a history book; but all these passages add up to a peculiarly lop-sided picture of the relationship between Athens and Sparta in days gone by.

VIII

The last topic that I shall examine is Aristophanes' presentation of Sparta's role in the events of his own time.

First, there is the question of responsibility for the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War. Fortunately this topic has been dealt with by an abler hand than my own, together with Aristophanes' two versions of what happened.³⁶ So we may be quite brief. The version in *Peace* (619–31) diffuses the blame as widely as possible: a play celebrating the conclusion of peace was hardly the right place for serious accusations against anyone. The earlier account of the origins of the war in *Acharnians* is more ludicrous, and more revealing of Aristophanes' own sentiments. Dikaiopolis wants peace, and has concluded a private treaty with Sparta. The Acharnians are furious, and he has to defend himself. All that the plot requires him to do is to praise the benefits of peace. Perhaps he might have argued that the war was not worth going on with. But this is not what he does. Instead, he sets out to exonerate the Spartans from all responsibility for starting the war. 'We are too harsh on the Spartans', he says; 'I know that they're not responsible for all our troubles' (309–14). Three times he refers to the speech which he is going to deliver, not as 'on behalf of peace', but as 'on behalf of the Spartans' (352–6; 368–70; 481–2). He begins his speech: 'I hate the Spartans' (*egō de misō*, 509); we may compare Euripides' aged relative in *Thesmophoriazousai*, who begins 'I hate that man' (*egōge...misō*, 470). Aged Relative then proceeds to defend him: 'nevertheless...' (*homōs de*). Dikaiopolis uses exactly the same rhetorical trick: 'nevertheless...' (*atar*). There follows the story of the Megarians, the mutual stealing of prostitutes and the Megarian decree. All this is familiar ground. What should be

stressed is that Aristophanes, who explicitly identifies himself with Dikaiopolis,³⁷ goes out of his way to do this, even though the plot does not require it – surely a powerful indication of his sympathetic attitude towards Sparta.

The annual invasions of Attica by the Spartans and their allies are mentioned several times. One reference (P 700–4) is the occasion for a joke about the comic poet Kratinos. He died when the Spartans invaded, says Trygaios: he passed out when he saw a jar full of wine being smashed.³⁸ Aristophanes is quite aware of the sufferings that these invasions caused (A 181, 512), but has no qualms about using them as the basis for a joke. The Athenians raided the Peloponnese in return, and cut down the figs of the Lakonian farmers, men who were perfectly innocent, says Hermes (P 626–7). One of these perioikic towns was Prasiai. A large force under Perikles himself sacked it in 430 and ravaged its territory (Thuc. 2 56). When War appears in *Peace*, it is Prasiai that he pounds first in his mortar: ‘Oho Prasiai, thrice wretched, five times wretched, umpteen times wretched, how you’ll be destroyed today!’ Trygaios remarks to the audience: ‘That’s none of our business: that’s a problem for Lakonia’ (242–5). It is revealing that Trygaios can shrug off Prasiai quite so callously. Just as the helots do not really count as Lakedaimonians in *Lysistrata*, so in *Peace* it does not really matter what happens to *perioikoi*.

The Athenian victory at Pylos and the capture of the Spartan prisoners is the source of much merriment in *Knights*. However, the laughter is directed, not at the enemy, but at the victorious Athenian general Kleon. He is said to have stolen the credit due to others for the operation – a distortion of the truth – and to have gone around talking about it all the time. All ten Pylos jokes in *Knights* are aimed at Kleon, and only one of the five references to Pylos in the other plays pokes fun at the Spartans.³⁹ This is in *Clouds* (185–6), where Sokrates’ pupils are said to look like the prisoners from Pylos, who had been languishing in Athens for some two years now, and must have looked pale and emaciated. Even that joke is more at the expense of

Sokrates' students than the Spartans. Yet the victory at Pylos was the most successful Athenian operation of the whole war; it was an appalling blow to Spartan morale (Thuc. 4 40, 55), and was to lead to the armistice of 423.⁴⁰ We might expect a comic poet to ridicule the defeated and despondent Spartans; scornful laughter, after all, is a powerful weapon for asserting superiority.⁴¹ He does nothing of the kind.

The most remarkable thing about Aristophanes' references to the contemporary events in which Sparta was involved is what he does *not* say. Only one Spartan commander is mentioned, Brasidas: he had been a hindrance to peace, and therefore his death is a cause for rejoicing, though during his lifetime Aristophanes had said nothing rude about him.⁴² But Brasidas, although the most spectacular of the Spartan commanders, was not the only one. Archidamos, who invaded Attika; Agis, who fortified Dekeleia; Gylippos, largely responsible for the Athenian defeat in Sicily; Lysander, the victor of Aigospotamoi; Pausanias, who reconciled the warring parties in 403 – these are major figures. And there are many others. Where are the jokes about these people? All concentrated in the lost plays? Hardly. The only Spartan that Aristophanes ridicules, as we have seen, is Kleomenes, safely dead for some eighty years. How are we to explain this silence? Did Aristophanes have personal friends at Sparta whom he was unwilling to offend? We do not know.

There remains the way in which Aristophanes alludes to peace initiatives. He always represents the Spartans as genuinely desiring peace, and the Athenians as unreasonably rejecting it.⁴³ He says nothing of Athens' peace proposals in 430, and never suggests that they might have had good reasons for rejecting Spartan offers. Thus in *Acharnians*, no one will listen in the Assembly when the question of making peace is raised. Yet when Amphytheos goes off to Sparta, he has no trouble at all in coming back with not just one peace treaty, but three different samples. The Spartans are said to be eager for peace too at *Acharnians* 652; and in the Council Kleon is represented as making up a story, which must have seemed plausible, that a Spartan herald

is on his way with peace terms (K 668–9). Whenever Spartans came to Athens about peace, the Athenians would immediately say they were being cheated, says Hermes (P 215–20). When the various Greek states are hauling Peace out of the cave, the Boiotians, Argives and Athenians are rebuked for not pulling hard enough. What about the Spartans? They, it is said, are pulling manfully, though Hermes immediately qualifies this by pointing out that it is only the captives from Pylos who are doing so (P 478–80). Peace herself says she came to Athens after Pylos with a hamper full of treaties, and was voted down three times in the assembly (665–9). Ten years later, in *Lysistrata*, as Henderson observes,⁴⁴ ‘Aristophanes contrives to make the Spartans the first to buckle and sue for peace’; when the ambassador arrives, ‘again the Spartans make the first move’ towards peace terms; and it is to the Spartans that Reconciliation turns first. During the Archidamian War, there had been some basis in reality for Aristophanes’ representation of the Spartans as being the more eager to come to terms; but the *Lysistrata* is pure fiction, and it is still the Spartans who take the lead in suing for peace.

IX

That completes our survey. What conclusions can we draw?

The average Athenian throughout the war was afraid of Sparta. This is neatly illustrated by the reaction of Strepsiades in *Clouds* (214–16) when he is shown a map. ‘Here’s Euboea’, says one of Sokrates’ students, ‘stretched out a long, long way’. ‘Where’s Sparta?’ asks Strepsiades... ‘Heavens, it’s close to us!: would you rethink that one, please, and move it away from us, a long, long way?’ And of course his fears were reasonable enough.

Aristophanes, however, treats the Spartans rather gently, tones down or even suppresses certain unpleasantness, and even expresses admiration for them. A passage in *Birds* (812–16) is even more striking. Two Athenians have left their native city

in disgust at the way things are going, and decide to found a new settlement in the sky. The question arises, 'What shall we call it?'; and the first suggestion is, not CloudCuckootown, but 'How about calling it that great name from Lakedaimon – Sparta?' This suggestion is no doubt made partly for the sake of the pun in the next line – but what an astonishing idea! Of course in comedy the silliest suggestion will raise the biggest laugh – but the name of Sparta, *to mega touto onoma*, still comes as a shock.

I am not of course saying that Aristophanes was a Lakonizer in the crudest sense, someone who aped Spartan fashions and *mores*. There are too many jokes against such people for that.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, it is clear that his attitude to Sparta was, as one scholar has put it, 'by no means hostile', despite the fact that Athens was engaged in a long and bitter war against her.⁴⁶ Indeed, this is something of an understatement. We have already seen that he does not make fun of any contemporary Spartan politician or military commander. The people that he does make fun of are the politicians and military commanders on his own side: Kleon above all, and Lamachos, and others too numerous to mention. It is as though a British comedian during the Second World War had come out with a stream of vitriolic jokes about Churchill and Montgomery, and had carefully refrained from making rude remarks about Hitler, Goering or Goebbels. Aristophanes was well aware of this himself. In *Acharnians* (649) he represents the king of Persia as asking the Spartan ambassadors, first, which side has the larger navy, and second, against which side Aristophanes directs the most abuse: the answer to both questions is clearly 'Athens'. This is, of course, a joke, but it is reassuring to find Aristophanes himself agreeing with my views.

It remains to ask why. The answer might be thought to lie in the nature of the Attic comedy. All Aristophanes' surviving plays are very firmly rooted in the life of Athens and Attika: they concern Attic farmers, Athenian jurymen, Athenian women and so forth. In *Clouds* all kinds of sophistic doctrines are attributed to Sokrates, which he never held; the most likely explanation is

that, unlike the Sophists themselves, Sokrates was an Athenian, and Aristophanes wanted an Athenian at the centre of his play.

But this explanation is inadequate. Athenian comedy was not invariably Athenocentric; and besides, Athenocentricity should not entail the exclusion of jokes against the enemy. Both Kratinos and Eupolis wrote plays entitled *Lakonians*, and Eupolis' *Helots* appears to have been anti-Spartan. Attacks on the Spartans also featured in Hermippos' *Basket-carriers* in the 420s and Plato's *Ambassador* in the 390s. Some of these comedies must have contained the kind of abuse and mockery of Sparta for which we look in vain in Aristophanes.⁴⁷

The answer, then, would seem to lie, not in the genre, but in Aristophanes' own personality, his gentle disposition towards the Athenian *kaloi kagathoi* and his Kimonian outlook which, as de Ste. Croix has argued, come over strongly throughout his *oeuvre*.⁴⁸ We do not know enough about his family background, or the events of his life, to speculate profitably on the influence that they may have had.⁴⁹ As for his friends, Plato depicts him in the *Symposium* as a member of the Sokratic circle, some of whom were notoriously well-disposed towards Sparta; this may possibly be significant, though a man may have friends whose political views are very different from his own. No-one would wish to maintain that Aristophanes was less than a patriotic Athenian; but consideration of all the evidence at our disposal makes it clear that his view of Sparta, even in wartime, was a good deal more sympathetic than has generally been suspected.

Notes

- 1 During the Archidamian War: *Acharnians* 425; *Knights* 424; *Clouds* 423; *Wasps* 422; *Peace* 421. During the Sicilian expedition: *Birds* 414. During the Ionian/Dekeleian War: *Lysistrata* 411; *Thesmophoriazousai* 411; *Frogs* 405. During the Corinthian War: *Ekklesiazousai* 392; *Ploutos* 388. Plays are referred to by the initial letter of their English titles; thus

- A = *Acharnians*, not *Aves*. Fragments are cited from Kassel-Austin, with Kock's numbers in brackets. J. Henderson's commentary on *Lysistrata* (Oxford 1987) should now be consulted at all relevant points.
- 2 Earlier discussions in E.N. Tigerstedt, *The Legend of Sparta in Classical Antiquity I* (Stockholm etc. 1965) 122–7, 423–6; U. Cozzoli, 'Relazioni tra Atene e Sparta nelle prospettive di Aristofane' in E. Lanzilotta (ed.), *Problemi di Storia e Cultura Spartana* (Rome 1984) 121–42.
 - 3 Fr. 100 (108); cf. Olck in *RE* 6.2 col. 2123 s.v. *Feige*.
 - 4 K 278–9; cf. Plut. *Lyk.* 12.12–13; *Mor.* 236F; Hesychius, s.v. *bapha*; Pollux 6.57. Adolf Hitler on bloody soup: E. Rawson, *The Spartan Tradition in European Thought* (Oxford 1969) 343.
 - 5 L 198, 206; on Spartan attitudes and practice regarding drink, N.R.E. Fisher, 'Drink, *hybris*, and the promotion of harmony in Sparta' in A. Powell (ed.), *Classical Sparta: Techniques Behind her Success* (London and Norman, Oklahoma 1989) 26–50.
 - 6 W 1157–66. The passage also plays on a misunderstanding: the old man takes 'put your foot into this Lakonian (sc. shoe)' as meaning 'put your foot on Lakonian soil', which he refuses to do.
 - 7 T 142; E 74, 269, 344–7, 542–3, 506–9. MacDowell in his commentary on the *Wasps* passage suggests that they were boots rather than shoes, for inadequate reasons. See A.A. Bryant, 'Greek shoes in the classical period', *HSCP* 10 (1899) at 81–3; L.M. Stone, *Costume in Aristophanic Poetry* (New York 1981) 225–7.
 - 8 Pausanias 7 14 2 (early 140s bc); Athenaios 5 215 b–c.
 - 9 T 421–3; I.M. Barton, 'Tranio's Laconian key', *G&R* 19 (1972) 25–31, at 26–7.
 - 10 Helots: cf. Kritias 88B37 DK. Aliens: D. Whitehead, 'The Lakonian key', *CQ* n.s. 40 (1990) 267–8.
 - 11 Plut. *Kleom.* 9.3 = Arist. fr. 539.
 - 12 Arist. fr. 496, Plut. *Mor.* 550b.
 - 13 Plato *Gorgias* 515e; *Protag.* 342b.

- 14 Homer, *Odyssey* 13 412. P.A. Cartledge, 'Spartan wives', *CQ* n.s. 31 (1981) 84–105, esp. 90–6. David Lewis has argued that the Athenian characters Lysistrata and Myrrhine were real historical personages: Lysistrata is Lysimache, priestess of Athena Polias at the time the play was produced, and Myrrhine is the priestess of Athena Nike; his view has been widely accepted: D.M. Lewis, 'Who was Lysistrata?', *BSA* 50 (1955) 1–12; accepted by, e.g., J. Henderson, *YCS* 26 (1980) 187–8. Cf. now P.J. Rahn, 'Funeral memorials of the first priestess of Athena Nike', *BSA* 81 (1986) 195–207. It is difficult, however, to identify Lampito with the famous Spartan queen of that name, aunt and subsequently wife of the long-deceased King Archidamos and mother of the reigning King Agis, since she will have been an extremely elderly woman at the time of the *Lysistrata* (if indeed she *was* still alive). The characteristics attributed to her in the play hardly fit an elderly woman. A similar age-dissonance indeed applies in the case of the sexy and seductive Myrrhine whose real-life namesake was appointed priestess of Athena in about 450. These illustrious names may simply be intended to designate women from the upper strata of Athenian and Spartan society.
- 15 P 215–20, 1081–87; L 629, cf. 1231–5.
- 16 L 106. Kritias 88 B37 DK; Cartledge, 'Hoplites and heroes', *JHS* 97 (1977) 13 (cf. W 845–59).
- 17 Athletics: boxing: fr. 100 (98); racing: L 1000; on the *hysplēx*; cf. G.E. Bean, *Aegean Turkey*, 2nd edn (London 1979) Appx. V.
- 18 Athletic women: L 81–2, 117–8; Eur. *Androm.* 596–601; Cartledge, 'Spartan wives' 91–3; M.C. and C.A. Roebuck, 'A prize aryballos', *Hesperia* 24 (1955) 158–63.
- 19 L 1105, 1148, 1162, 1173–4; fr. 358 (338, 907); cf. P. Cartledge, 'The politics of Spartan pederasty', *PCPS* 27 (1981) 17–36.
- 20 Photios expands: 'To engage in intercourse with a young man they call *lakōnizein*: for Theseus used Melaine in this

- manner, according to Aristotle.' Two emendations are necessary: Helene for Melaine, to bring Theseus into a Laconian context; and Aristophanes for Aristotle, to agree with the other testimonia. Just what Theseus thought he was up to is anyone's guess. The ancient explanations are printed with the fragment in Austin-Kassel.
- 21 E.g., C 1096–1100, J. Henderson, *The Maculate Muse* (New Haven and London 1975).
 - 22 H. Mayer Brown in *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, S. Sadie (ed.) vol. II (London 1980) 770–1 s.v. Bladder pipe; reprinted in *New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments* S. Sadie (ed.) vol. I (London 1984) 237–8. The words *physallis*, bladder (Luc. *Cont.* 19) and *physalos*, toad that puffs itself up (Luc. *Philops.* 12, *Dips.* 3), provide support for the identification. For the sound, R. Weber, 'Tournebout-Pifia-Bladderpipe (*Platerspiel*), *Galpin Soc. Journal* 30 (1977) 64–9, at 67, with plates xiv–xx, showing modern reconstructions as well as medieval examples. It can be heard being played by David Munrow and James Tyler on the HMV record *Instruments of the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, SLS 988.
 - 23 On the *dipodia*, L.B. Lawler, 'Diple, dipodia, dipodismos', *TAPA* 76 (1945) 55–73; K.J. Dover, *Lustrum* 2 (1957) 94.
 - 24 A.C. Cassio, 'Arte compositiva e politica in Aristofane', *RFIC* 110 (1982) 22–44 at 38–9.
 - 25 The clearest explanations are to be found in the commentaries by Neil and Sommerstein; see further A.H. Sommerstein, 'Notes on Aristophanes' *Knights*', *CQ* n.s. 30 (1980) 51–3.
 - 26 T. Kelly, 'The Spartan scytale' in J.W. Eadie and J. Ober (eds), *The Craft of the Ancient Historian: Festschrift C.G. Starr* (Lanham 1985) 141–69.
 - 27 For the Lakonian dialect see F. Bechtel, *Griechische Dialekte* vol. II (Berlin 1922) 293–382; E Bourguet, *Le dialecte lacorien* (Paris 1927); C.D. Buck, *The Greek Dialects* (Chicago 1955).
 - 28 U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Textgeschichte der griechischen Lyriker* (Berlin and Göttingen 1900) 94–6; idem,

- Aristophanes Lysistrate* (Berlin 1927) Intro. esp. 31–40; R.T. Elliott, commentary on the *Acharnians* (Oxford 1914) 207–41; Bechtel, *ibid.*, 294; Bourguet, *ibid.*, 7, 143–7.
- 29 For what follows, see the reference works cited in nn. 26–7 above.
- 30 The Spartans themselves spelt it with a theta in the fifth century, but in the fourth they sometimes represented the sound with a sigma, just like Aristophanes.
- 31 See Bechtel 294, Bourguet 143 (n. 27 above).
- 32 In view of *Clouds* (530–2) I would favour a date as late as possible.
- 33 Testimonia in Kassel-Austin 8; see J. van Leeuwen, *Prolegomena ad Aristophanem* (Leiden 1908) 38–45.
- 34 P.J. Rhodes, *A Historical Commentary on the Aristotelian Athenaiion Politeia* (Oxford 1981) index s.v. Harmodius.
- 35 On Aristophanes' Kimonian ideals, G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (London 1972) Appx. XXIX.
- 36 de Ste. Croix, *ibid.*, esp. 231–44 and Appx. XXIX.
- 37 A. 377 ff., 497 ff.
- 38 This passage has given commentators a headache, since Kratinos is known to have produced plays after the last invasion of Attica had taken place (last invasion 425; *Pytine* 423). Many are prepared to believe that Kratinos was still alive in 421, sitting in the audience and laughing at the joke. It seems best to assume that he had indeed died, and that Aristophanes has provided a suitable end for him that falls short of literal accuracy. For similar tampering with chronology for comic effect, L 274–80. Cf. a recent obituary where the circumstances may have been 'improved': 'It was after a lecture...preceded (*it was said with at least spiritual truth*) by three helpings of pudding, that he collapsed and died' (*BSA Report for 1982–3*, 32; my italics).
- 39 Jokes about Pylos directed at Kleon: K 54–5, 76, 354–5, 702, 742–3, 845–59, 1005 and 1008, 1052–3 and 1058–9, 1166–7, 1200–1. References in other plays: C 185–6; P 219, 478–80, 664–5; L 1163.

- 40 H.D. Westlake, 'The naval battle at Pylos and its consequences', *CQ* n.s. 24 (1974) 211–26, argues that Thucydides has exaggerated the impact of Pylos. I prefer to accept the judgment of a contemporary.
- 41 Cf. E. David, 'Spartan laughter' in A. Powell (ed.), *Classical Sparta* (n. 5 above) 1–25.
- 42 Bdelykleon in *Wasps* is accused by the Chorus of associating with Brasidas (476); War in *Peace* is told that the Spartans no longer have their pestle: they lent it to some people in the Thraceward area, and they lost it; 'Oh good!' responds Trygaios (281–5); Hermes (P 639–40) claims that the Athenian demagogues accused the fat and rich men among the allies of pro-Brasidean sentiments.
- 43 A 175–202, 652; K 668–9; P 215–20, 478–80, 665–9, L 980 ff., 1072 ff., 1115.
- 44 Op. cit. (n. 14) 208, 211.
- 45 W 474–6; B 1280–3; frs. 94, 97, 100 (92, 95, 98) with Kassel-Austin's notes. Kock argued that Aristophanes defended himself against a charge of Lakonism in the parabasis of *Babylonians*. But even if Kock was right, as he may well have been, in thinking that the fragments 'breakage of the ear', *lakedaimoniazō* and 'shivering with cold' occurred in the parabasis, there is no reason to assume that they formed part of a defence by the poet: it is more likely that they were aimed at other people, like the jokes about Lakonizers in *Birds* and *Wasps*.
- 46 Tigerstedt, op. cit. (n. 2) 123.
- 47 On Sparta in Kratinos, Eupolis and other Old Comedians, Tigerstedt, *ibid.*, 123, 423–4.
- 48 de Ste. Croix, op. cit. (n. 35) Appx. XXIX, esp. 371.
- 49 Though note the epigraphic evidence that he was personally acquainted with some very distinguished and prosperous gentlemen: S. Dow, *AJA* 73 (1969) 234–5.

III

THE DUPLICITOUS SPARTAN

Alfred S. Bradford

When the Greeks decided to move from their advanced position along the Asopus River at Plataea in 479 BC, they soon found themselves in trouble – the centre of the line fled in disorder, the Athenians on the left refused to move unless the Spartans did, and the Spartans did not move at all, because one subordinate Spartan commander refused to retreat in the presence of the enemy. Pausanias, the Spartan regent and commander of the Greek army, ordered the Athenians – despite the problem he was having with his subordinate commander, to begin their movement, but in response (Herodotus writes) the Athenians ‘stayed in formation and did not move, for they understood Spartan psychology, which was to think one thing and say another.’¹

This Spartan figure, the Spartan who thinks one thing and says another, is quite familiar in Greek literature. He is found most prominently in the *Apophthegmata Laconica* of Plutarch, where the foxiness of Spartans, ‘Lions at home, foxes abroad’,² is proverbial; there Cleomenes makes a truce for seven days and attacks the enemy on the third night (because, Cleomenes says, he had made a truce for the *days*, and not the *nights*, and, ‘anyway, among men and gods whatever you can do to the enemy outweighs justice’);³ there Lysander explains his own violation of an oath, ‘You use dice to fool children and oaths to fool men’;⁴ and again Lysander, when he is accused of deception, says, ‘Sometimes the lion’s skin must be pieced out with the fox.’⁵

On the other hand, although Herodotus in the passage above reports Spartan duplicity as a general truth (according to the Athenians at least), still the Athenians at Plataea were wrong. Pausanias was not deceiving them; indeed, this particular Spartan figure, the Spartan who thinks one thing and says another, does not appear in the *Histories*.⁶ Herodotus certainly knew duplicity and the other evils of the human heart: self-interest and self-absorption, greed, envy, malice, spite, vengefulness. Men, as he knew them, ascribed to a sort of Greek Golden Rule – do unto others double what they have done unto you – but he did not draw psychological distinctions between different peoples. Spartan, Athenian, Persian, all human beings share certain characteristics.

All men will, at one time or another, think one thing and say another. Darius (according to Herodotus) explained it thus, ‘There is no difference between the truth and a lie – for men speak both to gain some end’ (a comment which Plutarch put in the mouth of the Spartan, Lysander).⁷ The great Athenian law-giver, Solon himself, is represented as practising this sort of deception, though deception in a good cause: he announced that he was leaving Athens to go on a sightseeing trip, when really he was leaving town so that the Athenians could not get after him to change the laws.⁸ And Cyrus is reported to have said to a Spartan ambassador, in a comment which applies to other Greeks as much as to Spartans, ‘I do not fear men who are the sort to set aside a place in their city where they meet and deceive each other with oaths.’⁹

Of Herodotus’ three principal Spartan characters, Cleomenes, Leonidas, and Pausanias, each could have been portrayed, and two were portrayed by others, as men who thought one thing and said another. Leonidas at Thermopylae probably did not tell the Thebans that he required them to remain because they would just medize anyway, so they might as well be killed in a good cause (nor would Cleomenes’ co-king Demaratus have told the Aeginetans – or the Spartans – that he opposed Cleomenes out of envy and spite). But Herodotus chooses

not to present the Spartans as men who think one thing and say another, as Plutarch does, and as Thucydides, Euripides, and Aristophanes do. Herodotus either did not consider these Spartans to be particularly duplicitous or to be members of a national group exhibiting a duplicitous character, or he chose not to represent their duplicity.

The three most prominent Spartans in the *Histories* are Cleomenes, Leonidas and Pausanias. Cleomenes, as portrayed by Herodotus, was the half-mad king deranged by his impiety and punished by the gods. 'He cut his flesh into strips, starting at his shins, and from his shins proceeded to his hips and flanks, and finally reached his belly and cut it into strips and so he died in that way.'¹⁰ Herodotus offers several explanations for this suicide.

He went mad and did this, most Greeks say, because he had corrupted the Pythia in the Demaratus affair, but the Athenians say it was because, when he invaded Eleusis, he violated the shrine of Demeter, and the Argives say, it was because he had lured the fugitives from the battle out of the holy precinct of Argos and murdered them and had shown so little account for the sacred grove that he set it on fire.¹¹

Herodotus' own explanation is that Cleomenes suffered this fate because of the injustice he had done to Demaratus. The Spartans, however, gave a more prosaic explanation, that he suffered from acute alcohol poisoning and died in the throes of the DT's.¹² Herodotus' treatment of Cleomenes' death is typical of his method: he relates an incident, offers different explanations, and specifies the one he prefers. The portrait of Cleomenes is balanced, but not favourable. Cleomenes received 'the kingship, not because he was a good man, but because of his birth.'¹³ Herodotus had the material to portray Cleomenes (as Plutarch did) as a Spartan who thought one thing and said another. Instead, in the pages of the *Histories* Cleomenes twice refused hefty bribes to take action against the interests of Sparta (as he saw them), once when the Samian exile Maeandrius tried

to enlist his help against Persia,¹⁴ and again when Aristagoras tried to win his support for the Ionian Revolt.¹⁵

Indeed, in one instance, when, in the summer of 491 BC, the Athenians sent to Sparta to inform the Spartans that the Aeginetans had given earth and water to Darius and the Persians, and Cleomenes went into Aegina, intending to seize the Aeginetans most to blame, Herodotus explicitly states that 'Cleomenes was in Aegina working for the common interests of Greece'. Cleomenes failed (that time) because of the actions of his fellow king, Demaratus, who was motivated to oppose Cleomenes 'not because he favoured the Aeginetans, but because of envy and personal animosity'.¹⁶

And again, as a good deed (in response to Delphi's injunction) he drove the tyrants out of Athens. Admittedly, he wanted to restore them again, when he discovered that Cleisthenes had influenced the Pythia's response, but in the end Cleomenes accepted the situation.¹⁷ As to impiety, the Athenians charged him with sacrilege in that he despoiled the sacred land of Demeter at Eleusis. Herodotus reports the Athenian charge, but describes no such incident.¹⁸

In the pages of Herodotus Cleomenes does appear to be sophisticated in his dealings with the divine. In 508 in Athens he started to enter the sacred chamber of the goddess on the Acropolis. The priestess barred his way.

'Lacedaemonian foreigner, go back and do not enter the shrine, for it is a sacrilege for a Dorian to come here.'

He replied, 'Woman, I am not a Dorian, I am an Achaean.'¹⁹

In 495 he made war on Argos after consulting Delphi (which assured him that he would 'take' Argos), but when he would cross over the River Erasinos, the sacrifice was not favourable. Cleomenes said, 'I admire Erasinos for not betraying his fellow citizens, but, nonetheless, the Argives will not rejoice.' He led his army to the coast, sacrificed a bull to the sea, and conducted the army by boat into the Argolid.²⁰ After Cleomenes had defeated

the Argive army, the survivors of the battle fled into the grove of Argos. The Lacedaemonians surrounded the grove. When Cleomenes could not lure the Argives out, he set the grove on fire and torched some 6,000 Argives.²¹ (Herodotus does not relate the anecdote of the truce of 'days'.)

When Cleomenes returned to Sparta, he was accused of bribery, in that he had not taken Argos when he could easily have done so. He defended himself on the basis that a sign he had received during sacrifice at the Heraion had shown that Argos could not be taken.²² He was acquitted. When he decided to deprive Demaratus of the kingship, because Demaratus was not a king's son but was illegitimate, the Spartiates sought a response from the oracle in Delphi: was Demaratus the son of King Ariston? Cleomenes won the support of an influential man in Delphi who persuaded the Pythia to give the answer Cleomenes wanted. Thus the Pythia replied to the inquiry of the ambassadors that Demaratus was not the son of Ariston.²³ Cleomenes did corrupt the Pythia; and the Spartans, when they found out, were angry enough with him that he fled into Arcadia.

Herodotus' Cleomenes was crafty, but he did not think one thing and say another, except by implication in one peculiar episode. In 519 Cleomenes and the Lacedaemonians were approached by the Plataeans and were asked for protection. They did not accept the offer, because, they said,

'We live far away in our own territory and would be a cold comfort to you in yours. You could be enslaved several times before any of us knew about it. We recommend to you that you give yourselves over to the Athenians, for they are men who live in the land next to you and their help is not to be despised.'

The Lacedaemonians did not give this advice out of good will towards the Plataeans, but rather they wished to embroil the Athenians in troubles with the Boeotians.²⁴

In every other episode involving Cleomenes, Herodotus represents Cleomenes as the motivating power, often the only

power, but here Cleomenes disappears from the narrative and a nebulous *they* become the ones who 'wished to embroil...'. Cleomenes has no trouble expressing his own opinion elsewhere in Herodotus, nor in making policy on his own, nor in defending his actions before the Spartiates. Moreover, this episode occurred when he was in the field where the Spartan king had as much power as he could ever have. Herodotus could easily, and naturally, have written, 'Cleomenes did not give this advice out of good will towards the Plataeans, but rather he wished to embroil the Athenians in troubles with the Boeotians'. Herodotus could have entered Cleomenes' mind, here and elsewhere, as he did with other characters, and represented thoughts of one sort and words of another, but he chose not to. (I believe he chose not to because the episode forms a part of the Athenian story of Athenian-Plataean relations from their alliance to the destruction; that this episode is reflected in Thucydides, and related to the other case of Spartan 'duplicity' at Plataea.)²⁵ The material is there in the *Histories*; Cleomenes could have been presented as that Spartan figure who thinks one thing and says another (as he exhibited other characteristics the Athenians of Thucydides' generation considered inherent in the Spartan character: corruption and arrogance).

In the *Histories* Leonidas is the heroic Spartan. Herodotus accords him the highest praise. When Leonidas learned that he and his men were about to be surrounded at Thermopylae,

it is said that Leonidas himself dismissed the allies, not wanting them destroyed. And he, and the Spartiates there with him, thought it was not seemly to leave the post they had come in the first place to defend. I, myself, am of the opinion that Leonidas, since he had recognized that the allies were without heart and unwilling to run the risk with him, bid them depart, but he did not think it was right for him to leave. And by staying he won great glory and Sparta did not lose its happiness. For Delphi had given a prophecy to the Spartiates, when they asked about the war at the very beginning, that

either Lacedaemon would be sacked by the barbarians or their king would die.²⁶

They fought the Persians, some with broken spears, some with their swords, and Leonidas fell in this struggle, a man who was the best, and other with him, the best known of the Spartiates...²⁷

Over the body of Leonidas Persians and Lacedaemonians made a fearful struggle, and in the greatest show of courage the Greeks drove the enemy back four times...²⁸

Of the Lacedaemonians and Thespians, brave as they were, it was held that the best man was a Spartiate, Dieneces. They say this one made a witty remark before the hand-to-hand combat with the Medes, hearing someone of the Trachinians say that the barbarians would shoot so many arrows, they would hide the sun by their numbers. He, not being at all disturbed, said that he did not count as significant the numbers of the Medes, but the Trachinian stranger had announced something good, for if the Medes hid the sun, then the battle against them would be fought in the shade. This saying, and many others like it, Dieneces the Lacedaemonian is said to have left as a memorial.²⁹

The passages show Herodotus at his best, not just, as so often said, as a rhetorician and stylist, but as a diligent and fair historian. He reports nothing that could not have been known, except when he explicitly identifies his own conjecture that Leonidas stayed to fulfil a prophecy from the Delphic oracle. He does not put into Leonidas' mouth such gems as 'Eat a hearty breakfast, men, for we shall have dinner in Hell', or the reply to Xerxes' demand that he surrender his weapons, 'Come and take them', nor does he attribute Dieneces' remark to Leonidas.³⁰ In fact, Herodotus does not report in direct discourse a single remark of Leonidas. He gives no clues to his personality at all. Further, as far as the one witty remark goes, he tells us that Dieneces was known for clever remarks, he left behind a

memorial of wit, and with this *bon mot* he squelched a Trachinian man. (The Trachinians were the liaison between the Spartans and the navy.)

Herodotus' Pausanias is no typical Spartan figure either.³¹ He has doubts, he rather begs the Athenians to help him, and he shows despair as the barbarians close on him.³² Pausanias is the subject of several anecdotes illustrating his (Spartan) rectitude, and is the subject of one example of Spartan wit: when he saw the magnificent feast prepared for Mardonius, he had his own cooks prepare a typical Spartan meal and called upon his fellows to see and wonder that the Persians had come to conquer their poverty.³³ The three Spartan figures, Cleomenes, Leonidas, Pausanias, do not exhibit in the *Histories* this particular duplicitous trait, to think one thing and say another. Indeed, we find few cases of Spartan duplicity in the *Histories* at all and certainly we do not find that duplicity is the exclusive domain of Spartans nor a particular feature of their national character.

Herodotus concluded the *Histories* before the change of leadership in the Greek alliance, but he did write that the Athenians adhered to the alliance just as long as the outcome of the war was in doubt, but as soon as they knew that victory was certain, they used the high-handed conduct of Pausanias as an excuse to wrest the leadership from the Lacedaemonians.³⁴ In contrast, Thucydides wrote,

Already the other Greeks were upset because of [Pausanias'] violent nature and not least the Ionians and the others who had lately been freed from the King. Going to the Athenians they asked them to assume the leadership as they were of common blood and not to give in to Pausanias, if he turned brutal. The Athenians listened and replied that they would not ignore that and other things and that they would do what seemed best to them.³⁵

Thucydides reiterates the theme of a voluntary withdrawal by the Spartans from the leadership of the war against the Persians.³⁶ The difference of perception extends also to Pausanias,

who in Thucydides' account is a different, almost unrecognizable figure. He has become a tyrant, accused by the Greeks of many crimes: 'The greatest charge was that he had medized and it seemed absolutely clear'³⁷ and Pausanias 'was confident that he could free himself of the charges with bribes'³⁸ and:

Nonetheless he had provided many reasons for suspicion by his unlawful actions and his enthusiasm for barbarian ways and his not wishing to be equal with those around him. They considered the other actions, when he had departed from the established code of right and wrong, and especially that he had considered it right, when the Greeks set up the tripod in Delphi as part of a thank-offering from the Persian spoils, to have his name inscribed on it with the following lines:

The Leader of the Greeks, as he destroyed
the army of the Persians
Pausanias, sets up this memorial to Phoebus.

The Lacedaemonians chiselled out the elegy from the tripod and inscribed the names of the cities who, together, defeated the barbarians and then they set it up. This, they thought, was a criminal act by Pausanias, and, in addition to this, was something which comported with his way of thinking. They learned that he was meddling somehow with the helots. He had promised them freedom and citizenship, if they stood by him and did everything he wanted. Not even with information from helots did they trust or did they think to do something new against him, acting in the way they were accustomed to act among themselves, not to hurry to proceed against a Spartiate man with some irrevocable action unless they had indisputable proof.³⁹

But the plot was revealed and Pausanias took refuge in the Brazen House. The ephors settled down around the shrine and, when they perceived that he was on the point of death by starvation, they dragged him out, still breathing, and he died immediately after.

They were going to throw him into the Caiadas, like a common criminal, but then they decided to bury him nearby. The god in Delphi later gave a pronouncement to the Lacedaemonians that they should establish a tomb where he had died (and he now lies in front of the holy precinct, as an inscribed stele makes clear) and that they should give back two bodies in place of the one in the Brazen House to rid themselves of pollution. They had two bronze statues made, which they set up in place of Pausanias.⁴⁰

This story introduces the Spartan national character: the tyrannical nature of Spartans abroad, Spartan slowness, their duplicity, and the efficacy of bribery among Spartans (though Thucydides does not report that anyone actually was bribed, only that Pausanias was confident that bribery would work). The account is rich with what Spartans thought and what they would have done, if they had not done something else. For instance, two bronze statues (presumably of Pausanias)⁴¹ and a public tomb, by themselves evidence of respect and honour, in Thucydides' account become evidence of his criminal behaviour. Herodotus knew of this story – and that is exactly what he calls it, a *logos*: 'Pausanias, the son of Cleombrotus, the Lacedaemonian, at a later time, when he had a desire to become tyrant of Greece, if the story be true, was betrothed to the daughter of Megabates.'⁴²

The Pausanias story has a particular place and purpose in Book I of Thucydides which sets the scene for the Peloponnesian War and introduces the Spartans. Thucydides tells his readers that he will use the plainest evidence,⁴³ the speakers will be represented saying what the situation demands,⁴⁴ the account will not include a romantic element, it will be impartial.⁴⁵ Thucydides, however, was Thucydides because of his interest in the psychology of the people involved, as individuals and as groups. His psychological analysis was his genius, but he was an Athenian, and as an Athenian he was exposed to, if not wholly convinced by, the Athenian understanding of Spartan character.

Thus the real reason for the war was that the Spartans were afraid of the growth of Athenian power; that is, the real reason for the war was to be found in Spartan psychology.⁴⁶ He reiterates this theme in a caution to the reader not to accept the Spartans' claim that the Athenians had broken the treaty.⁴⁷ That claim was a pretext. Real motives are to be found within the human psyche, not in public explanations. Thus Thucydides differs from Herodotus (for our purposes) in two important ways: first, he assigns a set of national characteristics to Spartans (and to Athenians), characteristics which underlie the second difference, namely his attempt to present a complete and coherent psychological portrait of the major characters of his work. The Spartans are slow and cautious,⁴⁸ safe and sure.⁴⁹ The Athenians are inventive and daring.⁵⁰ The Spartans defend themselves by leading others to think they will act.⁵¹ The Spartans are harsh when they get away from their discipline: 'When one of you goes abroad, he follows neither his own rules nor those of the rest of Hellas.'⁵²

The slow and cautious Spartan appears at the very beginning, in the speeches of the Corinthians and of Archidamus, in the story of Pausanias, and, as opposed to the daring and inventiveness of the Athenians, Spartan caution appears throughout.⁵³ After Pylos, for instance, the Spartans were 'now more than ever irresolute in their military conduct'.⁵⁴ In the Melian Dialogue the Athenians tell the Melians that the Spartans are not very venturesome.⁵⁵ And when at last the Spartans do act, after the Athenians attack Syracuse, they act because a quick-witted Athenian by the name of Alcibiades has goaded them into action.⁵⁶ In short, the Spartans were the best enemies the Athenians could have had.⁵⁷

The Spartan is harsh abroad. Pausanias, certainly, is the prime example, but the harsh Spartan reappears in the leaders of the foundation of Heraclea in Trachis:

it was in fact the governors sent out from Sparta itself who were very largely responsible for the decline of the city and

the drop in its population; their harsh and often unjust administration had the effect of frightening away the majority of the colonists, so that it was all the easier for their neighbours to get the upper hand over them.⁵⁸

In the end the Boeotians took over Heraclea and expelled the Spartan leader Agesippidas for not ruling well.⁵⁹ And, finally, King Agis extorts money from neutrals.⁶⁰

The charge that Spartans were susceptible to bribes is less obvious, but Pausanias was sure he could bribe his way out of trouble, King Pleistoanax was exiled for accepting bribes,⁶¹ and, at the very end, Astyochus, a Spartan commander, proved susceptible to bribes,⁶² and he was arrogant⁶³ and he played a double-game.⁶⁴ And yet these are minor traits compared to the greater, and particular, vice of Spartan character, duplicity. Accusations of Spartan deceit, and the other despicable traits of Spartan character, played well to an Athenian audience. So, for instance, in Euripides' *Andromache*, we find⁶⁵

O most detested of mortals among all humanity,
Inhabitants of Sparta, council-house of trickery,
Masters of lies, weavers of webs of evil,
Thinking crooked things, nothing healthy, but always
Devious, your good fortune in Greece is unjust!
What is there not among you? Multiple murders?
Shameful bribery! are you not found out always saying
One thing with the tongue, while thinking another!

Aristophanes in the *Acharnians* says, 'For them neither sanctity nor pledge nor oath holds true.'⁶⁶ And in the *Peace*, 'Their hearts are treacherous, their minds are treacherous'.⁶⁷ In other comedies he calls them greedy bribe-takers, but Aristophanes can also blame the Athenians for always listening to what the Spartans did not say and never hearing what they did say.⁶⁸

Thucydides' portrait of Spartans is the Athenian portrait (as we have it). If Spartans are such, if (*as all would agree*) Spartans say one thing and think another, then Thucydides has the duty

to explain to the reader what was really going on in the Spartan mind. And he does. For instance, when the ephor Sthenelaïdas put the question of war and peace to the Spartan assembly, he said he could not decide who had shouted louder so he had the assembly divide; that is what he said but what he really thought (Thucydides tells us) was that he would make them show their opinions openly and increase their enthusiasm for the war.⁶⁹

Thucydides introduces the reader to the Spartan mentality with three significant episodes in Book I: the treason of Pausanias (already described), the rebuilding of the walls of Athens, and the great earthquake. Thucydides⁷⁰ tells the reader that the Spartans much preferred that neither the Athenians, nor anyone else, had walls; most of their allies were upset and feared the new naval power of the Athenians and also their daring, which had been revealed in the Persian Wars. (The theme reappears in Thucydides' speech attributed to the Corinthians.) But as the Lacedaemonians did not wish to make their suspicions known to the Athenians, they sent an embassy to say that there should be no strong point available to the barbarians, as Thebes had been, should the barbarians come again. The Athenians, through a series of manoeuvres, put off the Spartans until their walls were built. Then Themistocles announced to the Spartans, 'We decided that it was better for our city to have a wall and it will be of more use for our citizens in private and for our allies. For it was not possible, except from equal resources, to give equivalent or equal advice.'

The Lacedaemonians did not reveal anger to the Athenians, but they said that they had not given this advice out of ill will, but for the common good, and they had the warmest feelings for those who, next to themselves, had shown the greatest zeal against the Persians, and they were hurt that their good advice had been so misunderstood.

Thucydides, however, does not allow the reader to believe that this explanation is anything other than Spartan duplicity. When the great earthquake occurred,⁷¹ the Spartans had been

intending to invade Attica (a plan which the Athenians of that time could hardly have been aware of when they were deciding to help the Spartans) in support of the Thasians. Because of the helot revolt the Spartans had to forego these plans and call upon their allies, the Athenians among them, for help against the Messenian helots who had taken refuge on Ithome. The Athenians under the leadership of Cimon came gladly. The Spartans

feared the daring and the revolutionary spirit of the Athenians and they considered that they were of another race and they feared, if the Athenians remained, they might be convinced by the Messenians to start a revolution, so they dismissed them and they did not explain their suspicion, but they said that they had no more need of them. The Athenians knew they hadn't been sent away for any other reason than Spartan suspicion.

These three stories are, at the very least, Athenian versions of actual events, and, in the case of Pausanias' treachery, may be a fabrication (but not by Thucydides); the earthquake was real, the Athenian expedition was real, but the Spartan motivation for dismissing the Athenians was an Athenian assumption, as was Spartan motivation for the request not to rebuild their walls. The motives ascribed are the motives ascribed to them by Athenians (of the generation before Thucydides), based on Athenian assumptions about Spartan character.

Book I concludes with a comparison of Pausanias and Themistocles and a speech by Pericles. Themistocles demonstrates precisely those greatest Athenian traits, force of genius and rapidity of action – traits he shared with Pericles. The speech of Pericles reiterates the main point: the war is a Spartan plot against Athens.⁷² Thus, we know on the eve of the war what Spartans are like: slow, cautious, fearful of the Athenians, harsh to others, susceptible to bribes (or, at least, made susceptible by greed), and, more than anything else, treacherous and deceitful, and their deceit is always aimed at Athens.

Throughout the rest of his work Thucydides presents both

Spartans who are duplicitous and Athenians who are equally ready to accuse them of duplicity and to believe tales of their duplicity. When the Spartans made proposals to Athens to settle their differences at the time of Pylos and wanted to negotiate with a committee, Cleon said to the assembly that he had always known that there was nothing upright in their proposals and the proposals were rejected.⁷³ From the very beginning of the Peace of Nicias the Athenians suspected the Spartans of bad faith.⁷⁴ The new ephors did not want peace (Thucydides tells us) and conducted secret negotiations with the Boeotians to make an alliance with Argos to bring Argos and Sparta together.⁷⁵ The Spartans made a secret alliance with Thebes and the Athenians considered that secret alliance bad faith.⁷⁶ Alcibiades said that the only reason the Spartans had made peace was to isolate Argos, crush it, and then attack Athens.⁷⁷ he accused the Spartan negotiators of having no truth in their minds and never speaking consistently.⁷⁸ (The Athenians then rejected what the Spartans had to say and, instead, listened to Alcibiades.)

The duplicitous Spartan is to the Athenians the only Spartan, a notion which Cleon uses and Aristophanes warns the Athenians against.⁷⁹ In the Melian Dialogue the Athenians say that the Spartans are conspicuous for believing that what they like doing is honourable and what suits their interests is just.⁸⁰ By the beginning of the Decelean War, the Spartans, whatever they might profess (and they did profess that they were the liberators of Greece), threw themselves into the war with the knowledge that if they defeated Athens they would gain the leadership of Greece.⁸¹

Perhaps nowhere is Spartan duplicity so obvious as at Plataea. Thucydides dedicates thirty-one chapters and several speeches to this episode. When it was obvious that the Plataeans could no longer defend themselves, the Spartan commander called upon them to surrender, because he expected in any future peace agreement the Spartans would have to return the places they had taken, but could keep the places that had voluntarily come over.⁸² The Spartans promised a fair trial to those who

surrendered⁸³ and then put the question: what had they done to help Sparta in the present war?

In their defence the Plataeans mention how they had applied to Sparta for protection and the Spartans had referred them to Athens (which recalls Herodotus' story).⁸⁴ The Spartans had a good name for fairness, but now they would have an infamous reputation.⁸⁵ They would break the established customs of Greece.⁸⁶ The Spartans, according to Thucydides, executed the Plataeans to win the favour of the Thebans who at this stage of the war they thought would be useful to them.⁸⁷ With Plataea we see the Spartans at their most Spartan and Thucydides at his most Athenian. The Spartans did nothing, they said nothing, which did not have its hidden and treacherous purpose including even the very reasons for their advising the Plataeans to appeal to the Athenians in the first place.⁸⁸ But if Thucydides believes that all Spartans share these characteristics – caution, harshness, corruption, greed, and duplicity – what are we to make of the portrait of Brasidas? For Brasidas appears to be quick and daring, moderate, honest, and forthright.

The chief factor in creating a pro-Spartan feeling among the allies of Athens was the gallantry of Brasidas and the wisdom he showed at this time, qualities which some knew from experience of them and others assumed because they had been told of them. He was the first to be sent out in this way, and by the excellent reputation which he won for himself on all sides he left behind a rooted conviction that the rest were also like him.⁸⁹

Thucydides' point is, I believe, that Greeks *were* deceived. Spartans were not like Brasidas, and, yes, Brasidas was noble, but he was also a Spartan. When introducing the expedition of Brasidas, Thucydides digresses to relate how the Spartans murdered 2,000 helots (a crime, which, assuming that it did occur and may even be the 'multiple murders' of Euripides, did not occur at the time of the recruitment of the helots for Brasidas' army).⁹⁰ By the juxtaposition of the two passages Thucydides is

reminding the reader, this is what it really means to be a Spartan: Spartans are multiple murderers.

Brasidas was perfectly willing to lie to gain what he wanted, with a lie he fooled the Thessalians into thinking that he would not move through their territory without permission, and he stole a march on them.⁹¹ Brasidas declared to the Acanthians that the Spartans were fighting the war for the liberation of Greece,⁹² that the Spartans had sworn oaths that the cities which came over to him would be free, that his goal was to help them escape their bondage to Athens. He said, 'I have not come here to take sides in your internal affairs', and 'it is disgraceful to gain one's end by deceit... We Spartans are only justified in liberating people against their own will, because we are acting for the good of all. We have no imperialistic ambitions.'⁹³ All of this we, and Thucydides, and perhaps even Brasidas, know ultimately to be untrue.

Brasidas pledged his own word that the cities would be independent.⁹⁴ Brasidas behaved with great moderation and he constantly proclaimed that his mission was the liberation of Greece, but when he came to offer Amphipolis terms, he offered them very moderate terms, not from the goodness of his heart, but because he was afraid that once the Athenians came up he could not take Amphipolis.⁹⁵ He took Torone by treachery and proclaimed that he was acting in the name of freedom; he told them that Spartans acted more justly than Athenians and he forgave them for opposing him, because they didn't know him.⁹⁶

The rebels thought they were safe, but they underestimated the power of Athens, partly because (Thucydides explicitly states) Brasidas had lied to them; he told them that the Athenians had been afraid to face him in battle.⁹⁷ 'Now it looked for the first time as though the Spartans were going to act with some energy' but the other Spartans did not support Brasidas, partly from envy and jealousy, partly from their desire to make peace and regain the prisoners from Pylos.⁹⁸ Brasidas pledged alliance with Scione; if they would come over they would be the best friends of Sparta.⁹⁹ 'The Athenians were furious that they would

dare to trust in the land power of Sparta which would do them no good.' Moreover, Brasidas violated the truce. (The revolt of Scione took place two days after the truce.)¹⁰⁰ Already the Spartans were breaking their oaths; they sent out some young men to be put in charge of the cities. If Brasidas objected, Thucydides does not mention it.¹⁰¹

Even after Brasidas had learned of the truce he continued to violate it; he called on the allies to win their freedom for themselves and the title of allies of Sparta.¹⁰² After Brasidas was killed, the two sides made peace. In the peace treaty the Spartans abandoned Scione and Torone to the Athenians to do with what they would:¹⁰³ they left Amphipolis to its own devices.¹⁰⁴ The Athenians reduced Scione and killed the adult males and sold the rest of the population into slavery.¹⁰⁵ They did the same to Torone.¹⁰⁶ In short, the promises of Brasidas proved to be empty. The *mirage* of Brasidas fastened on men's minds and blinded them to the reality of their situation. They were seized by the hope that all Spartans were like Brasidas and that they would be free. (Perhaps Thucydides might have agreed to the following proposition: if all Spartans had been like Brasidas, then his promises might have been honoured and Greeks might have been able to live free, but the other Spartans were not like Brasidas, and even he, remember, was a Spartan.)

The Spartan type of Thucydides is like in character to the Spartan type of Euripides and Aristophanes (though Aristophanes' individual Spartan characters are not much like the type), and to the Spartans in the Plataea stories in the *Histories* of Herodotus, but they are unlike most of the Spartans of Herodotus (and of the later Spartanophile – but Athenian – Xenophon).¹⁰⁷ The Spartans of Herodotus (and Xenophon) were no slower than the citizens of other hoplite powers, they were no harsher in positions of power abroad than other Greeks, they were no more susceptible to bribery than other Greeks, nor, finally, were they more duplicitous than other Greeks – that is, they did not have a hidden agenda which they carried forward through deceit. They did not live up to their

mirage, certainly, but they were not the peculiar villains of Thucydides, Euripides, or Aristophanes. Thucydides' assessment of Spartan character is not proven by Thucydides' work either; arrogance abroad, duplicity, slowness, these traits appear in some Spartans and not in others, and bribed Spartans are hard to find. Thucydides has accepted these traits, and Spartan national character, as self-evident truths which do not require further explication. The maxim that we find in Herodotus (IX 54: ἐπιστάμενοι τὰ Λακεδαιμονίων φρονήματα ὡς ἄλλα φρονούντων καὶ ἄλλα λεγόντων) is found almost verbatim in Euripides (*Andromache* 451–2: οὐ λέγοντες ἄλλα μὲν γλώσση, φρονούντες δ' ἄλλ' ἐφευρίσκεσθ' αἰεὶ;), paraphrased by Thucydides (V 45 3: ὡς οὐδὲν ἀληθὲς ἐν νῶ ἔχουσιν οὐδὲ λέγουσιν οὐδέποτε ταῦτά) and explicitly attributed to Athenian wrong-headedness by Aristophanes (*Lysistrata* 1233–5: ὥσθ' ὃ τι μὲν ἂν λέγωσιν οὐκ ἀκούομεν, / ἃ δ' οὐ λέγουσι, ταῦθ' ὑπονενοήκαμεν, / ἀγγέλλομεν δ' οὐ ταῦτά τῶν αὐτῶν πέρι). Their brand of duplicity – think one thing, say another – is an Athenian commonplace,¹⁰⁸ and, moreover, a characterization which is particularly invidious, because it cannot be refuted: if a Spartan does something nasty, well, Spartans are nasty, and, if he does something not so nasty, at the least he has done it for nasty motives. The Spartans as presented are no more duplicitous than the Athenians (Alcibiades, for example), but once duplicity is accepted as a feature of Spartan psychology, then all their actions, as Aristophanes acknowledged, can be interpreted as duplicitous.

The differences between Herodotus' (and Xenophon's) Spartans and Thucydides' Spartans can be attributed to different literary, or historical, purposes, or to different perceptions of Spartans, or to a different selection of evidence, but, in the end, Herodotus and Thucydides, as do all writers, be they historians or dramatists, created their own Spartans. Thucydides, Euripides, and Aristophanes reflected Athenian attitudes and they reinforced them, but they did not create them. The assumptions about Spartan national character and the formulation of traits, in particular, the trait of thinking one thing and

saying another, already existed when Thucydides wrote his history.

Through the work of fifth century Athenian writers the character of the duplicitous Spartan entered literature.

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Notes

- 1 Herodotus IX 54.
- 2 Leutsch and Schneidewin, *Paroemiographi Graeci*, vol. I. 30; Plutarch, *Comparison of Lysander and Sulla*. The foxiness of Spartans is by no means an invention of Plutarch. Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* has the Spartans promise to stop acting like foxes (1268).
- 3 Plutarch *Moralia* (*Apophthegmata Laconica*) 223a2 (Cleomenes).
- 4 Plutarch *Moralia* (*Apophthegmata Laconica*) 229b4.
- 5 Plutarch *Moralia* (*Apophthegmata Laconica*) 229b3.
- 6 Herodotus is generally considered naive and unreliable. See, for instance, his translator A.R. Burn in *Herodotus, The Histories* (New York 1972) 33: Herodotus was 'disastrously misled by his Athenian friends' and 34: 'the first principle of critical

reading of Herodotus on the Persian Wars is...that one must look out for the bias of his sources, whom he rarely names'; and 36 for an unflattering comparison with Thucydides.

- 7 Hdt. III 72 4–5; Plutarch *Moralia* (*Apophthegmata Laconica*) 229a2.
- 8 Hdt. I 29 1.
- 9 Hdt. I 153 1.
- 10 Hdt. VI 75.
- 11 Hdt. VI 75.
- 12 Hdt. VI 84: 'The Spartiates say that Cleomenes enjoyed the Scythians' company enormously, and associated with them rather more than he should have, learned to drink straight wine, and so, the Spartiates contend, went mad.'
- 13 Hdt. V 42–7.
- 14 Hdt. III 148: (in c. 518 BC) 'Cleomenes proved to be the justest of men, for he thought it was not right to take what was offered...and he went to the ephors and told them it would be better for Sparta if the Samian foreigner were expelled from the Peloponnesus.'
- 15 Hdt. V 51.
- 16 Hdt. VI 49.
- 17 Hdt. V 65; 74–5; 90–92a2: perhaps after Cleisthenes had been ostracized.
- 18 Hdt. V 74–5.
- 19 Hdt. V 72–3 1.
- 20 Hdt. VI 76.
- 21 Hdt. VI 77–80; VII 148.
- 22 Hdt. VI 81–2.
- 23 Hdt. VI 61; 73.
- 24 Hdt. VI 108.
- 25 Thuc. III 68.
- 26 Hdt. VII 220.
- 27 Hdt. VII 224.
- 28 Hdt. VII 225.
- 29 Hdt. VII 226.

- 30 Plutarch *Moralia* (*Apophthegmata Laconica*) 225a–c.
- 31 Hdt. IX 33–72.
- 32 Hdt. IX 60–61.
- 33 Hdt. IX 82.
- 34 Hdt. VIII 3 2: *prophasin*.
- 35 Thuc. I 95; A.W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides* vol. I, 272 (to show how convincing Thucydides can be, despite Herodotus and [Aristotle] *Ath. Pol.* 23. 2).
- 36 Thuc. III 10.
- 37 Thuc. I 95; an example of his methods: H.D. Westlake, 'Thucydides and the fall of Amphipolis', *Hermes* 90 (1962), 276–87. Part of the immense literature on Thucydides' treatment of Pausanias: C.W. Fornara, 'Some aspects of the career of Pausanias of Sparta', *Historia* 15 (1966) 257–71; Friedrich Cornelius, 'Pausanias', *Historia* 22 (1973) 502–04; Mabel L. Lang, 'Scapegoat Pausanias', *CJ* 63 (1967) 79–85; H.D. Westlake, 'Thucydides on Pausanias and Themistocles: a written source?', *CQ* 27 (1977) 95–100; F.W. Mitchel, marginalia to Westlake 103 and n. 65: 'He got the Pausanias story whole cloth from the Spartans and probably most of the early part of the Themistocles story'; Westlake quoting Meiggs, n. 5, R. Meiggs, 'Appendix 4: The Latter Days of Pausanias', *Athenian Empire* (Oxford 1973) 465–8: at 465, if the excursus had "been written by any other Greek historian, it would not have been taken seriously"; Detlef Lotze, 'Selbstbewusstsein und Machtpolitik', *Klio* 52 (1970) 255–75; Alec Blamire, 'Pausanias and Persia', *GRBS* 11 (1970) 295–304; P.J. Rhodes, 'Thucydides on Pausanias and Themistocles', *Historia* 19 (1970) 387–400; Adolf Lipold, 'Pausanias von Sparta und die Perser', *RhM* 108 (1965) 320–41; J.F. Lazenby, 'Pausanias, son of Kleombrotos', *Hermes* 103 (1975) 235–51.
- 38 Thuc. I 131.
- 39 Thuc. I 132.
- 40 Thuc. I 134.
- 41 Cf. Diod. Sic. IX 45 9.

- 42 Hdt. V 32; a comparison of Herodotus and Thucydides: Lionel Pearson, 'Propaganda in the Archidamian War', *CP* 31 (1936) 33–52.
- 43 Thuc. I 21.
- 44 Thuc. I 22.
- 45 Thuc. I 22.
- 46 Thuc. I 23, 118. In one sense Thucydides is at the culmination of the Greek tradition to seek answers within human reason and a human context; in another sense he is at the beginning of the historical tradition to seek motives within human psychology. This is his genius, (as it is the genius of Euripides, Aristophanes, and Socrates).
- 47 Thuc. I 87; T.E. Wick, 'Megara, Athens, and the West in the Archidamian War: a study in Thucydides', *Historia* 28 (1979) 1–14, on Thucydides' arrangements to de-emphasize other causes for the war. Demosthenes (IX 25), looking back at the war (and for reasons of his own), explained it this way: 'we ourselves and the Spartans hadn't a word to say about any injustice we had suffered from each other, but nonetheless we thought we had to go to war because of the wrongs done to others.' His literary abilities were also part of Thucydides' genius. Solely as a literary stylist he has created portraits of the figures of this time which are the most convincing and compelling individuals in Greek history. Thucydides must be ranked the creator of one of the greatest literary works of the ancient world. His juxtaposition of events and personalities: Themistocles/Pericles, Melos/Sicily, murder/Brasidas; his use of speeches composed by himself, and the Melian dialogue to emphasize the larger questions of Athenian imperial policy are dramatic and rhetorical devices, but no less important historically. My position is: Thucydides cannot be said to be right or wrong; we would have to put Spartans on the couch and probe their psyches to answer that question. His approach is valid and his analysis is the analysis of one of history's finest minds, but, nonetheless, an Athenian mind. A Spartan, if

there had been one of comparable genius, could have used the same method to describe an Athenian national character, psychologically restless, tyrannical, grasping, a character which made peace impossible.

48 Thuc. I 84 (speech of Archidamus).

49 Thuc. I 85.

50 Thuc. II 40–1 (funeral oration).

51 Thuc. I 69 (speech of the Corinthians).

52 Thuc. I 77.

53 For a direct and explicit comparison of national character, see Thuc. VIII 96 5.

54 Thuc. IV 55.

55 Thuc. V 107.

56 Thuc. VI 89–93.

57 Thuc. VIII 96; caution is not always bad. The Chians and the Spartans are the only ones, Thucydides writes, who matched prosperity with measures to preserve it, and did not let it go to their heads (Thuc. VIII 24).

58 Thuc. III 93; V 12.

59 Thuc. V 52 1.

60 Thuc. VIII 3.

61 Thuc. II 21; V 16–17: the Spartan king Pleistoanax wanted peace to free himself of charges of bribery and corruption and being a jinx, ‘as those in the highest places in war get blamed for what goes wrong’.

62 Thuc. VIII 50.

63 Thuc. VIII 84.

64 Thuc. VIII 85.

65 Euripides *Andromache* 445–53 (451–2).

66 Aristophanes *Acharnians* 308; for another congruence between Aristophanes, Euripides, and Thucydides, see Alan L. Boegehold, ‘A dissent at Athens, c. 424–421 bc’, *GRBS* 23 (1982) 147–56 (that is, that they reflected contemporary Athenian opinion).

67 Aristophanes *Peace* 1066–7.

68 Aristophanes *Lysistrata* 629, 1231–5; *Peace* 619 f. (623)

aischrokerdeis and, if we believe that the waning moon which appeared on Athenian coins after Marathon was a reference, not merely to the date, but to the Spartans refusal to move until the moon was full, then the Spartans were, at the least, slow, if not devious, or just plain treacherous (Charles Seltman, *Greek Coins* (London 1955) 91–2).

- 69 Thuc. I 87.
- 70 Thuc. I 90–92.
- 71 Thuc. I 102 3–4; [Xenophon] *Athenaion politeia* III 11 has a simpler version: whenever the people of Athens tried to take the side of the aristocracy, they lost an advantage: the Athenians helped the Spartans instead of the Messenians, the Spartans subjugated the Messenians and then turned against the Athenians.
- 72 Thuc. I 140; W.R. Connor, *Thucydides* (Princeton 1984) 39–47
- 73 Thuc. IV 22.
- 74 Thuc. V 35.
- 75 Thuc. V 36.
- 76 Thuc. V 39, 42.
- 77 Thuc. V 43.
- 78 Thuc. V 45 3; cf. Persian king's letter, IV 108 5.
- 79 But as we are not bound (to give an extreme example) by the German view that England engineered the First World War out of fear of losing its markets to the Germans and the British intelligence worked to bring about the Second World War and the extermination of the German nation, neither are we bound by the Athenian view of Spartan policy.
- 80 Thuc. V 105.
- 81 Thuc. VIII 2 4.
- 82 Thuc. III 52.
- 83 Thuc. III 52 2.
- 84 Thuc. III 55.
- 85 Thuc. III 57–8.
- 86 Thuc. III 59.

- 87 Thuc. III 68.
- 88 As Herodotus relates repeating, I believe, the Athenian version. I believe the story of Cleomenes and the Plataeans belongs here, except that Cleomenes does not appear in the Athenian version. The Athenian story of Plataea has three significant moments of Spartan duplicity: the first moment when they were sent by the Spartans to Athens, the second at the battle of Plataea, and the third, the destruction of Plataea.
- 89 Thuc. IV 81; H.D. Westlake, 'Thucydides, Brasidas, and Clearidas', *GRBS* 21 (1980) 333–9 on Thucydides' entry into the mind of Brasidas (and Clearidas), here attributed to a source.
- 90 Thuc. IV 80; Gomme vol. III, 547–8.
- 91 Thuc. IV 78: what is a *ruse de guerre* but deceit without treachery?
- 92 Thuc. IV 85.
- 93 Thuc. IV 86–7.
- 94 Thuc. IV 88.
- 95 Thuc. IV 105.
- 96 Thuc. IV 114.
- 97 Thuc. IV 108 5.
- 98 Thuc. IV 108.
- 99 Thuc. IV 120.
- 100 Thuc. IV 122.
- 101 Thuc. IV 132.
- 102 Thuc. V 9.
- 103 Thuc. V 18.
- 104 Thuc. V 21.
- 105 Thuc. V 12.
- 106 Xen. *Hell.* II 2 3.
- 107 The Spartans of Xenophon are not without guile. Dercylidas was nicknamed Sisyphus and was particularly good at clever stratagems (Xen. *Hell.* III 1 8). Agesilaus was also a master of stratagem (Xen. *Hell.* III 4 11–12 (Caria), 20–1 (deceiving with the truth)). Lysander is a colourless

individual in the *Hellenica*. Thus the difference between the Spartans of Thucydides and of Xenophon is not their deceptive abilities, but their motives. To Xenophon their deceptions are legitimate because they are in a good cause, to Thucydides and the Athenians of his generation, Spartan deception (duplicity) was evil and pernicious, because it was aimed at Athens always and in every case and because the Spartans were no longer capable of straight dealing and because they had a hidden agenda. Agesilaus has an open and acknowledged enemy whom he fools through a legitimate *ruse de guerre*, similarly Dercylidas, for all he was nicknamed Sisyphus. This is quite different from openly expressing good will towards the Athenians while trying to dominate them or claiming to liberate Greeks while intending to subjugate them.

- 108 Herodotus IX 54; Euripides *Andromache* (451–2); Aristophanes *Lysistrata* (1233–5). That four authors should present the same idea and use almost identical wording about this Spartan characteristic convinces me that the phrase was well known and was a catch phrase in Athens.

IV

TWO SHADOWS: IMAGES OF SPARTANS AND HELOTS¹

Michael Whitby

The purpose of this paper is to reconsider the evidence for the views that other Greeks held about one particular aspect of Sparta, one that has been prominent in modern discussion, namely the role of the helots in what can be termed, for the sake of convenience, 'the Spartan class struggle': what were the images that Sparta imposed on various approximately contemporary observers or that these observers perceived in Sparta? How carefully have these external images been analysed in attempts to reconstruct a Spartan, or Spartiate, view of the helots? How dark was the shadow that the helots cast on Spartan life and conduct?

Modern opinions

With regard to the helots and their effect on Sparta, the majority opinion among contemporary scholars, certainly those writing in English, is that the helots were for the Spartan system at best a mixed blessing, but more probably its Achilles' heel: characteristic phrases or images are of Sparta as a Fafner-like monster enduring 'the curse Sparta had brought upon herself',² 'holding, as it were, a wolf by the throat';³ there is a 'persistent Spartan concern with the question' of how to maintain secure control of the helots,⁴ while the famous military regime of the Spartans becomes 'the price Sparta inevitably paid for maintaining a uniquely profitable system of economic exploitation'.⁵

These powerful negative images, based on one strand of interpretation in the ancient sources, have been influential in shaping modern analyses of Sparta. The image is taken to be a securely-attested reality, and this is then used as a basis for further hypotheses about the nature of the Spartan system or Sparta's relations with the outside world: thus the Spartan population can be portrayed as the victim of a fixation of fear that is carefully cultivated by the authorities as a means of assuring compliance with the system,⁶ while alleged Spartan caution in foreign affairs is associated with the belief that its military system was 'aimed against an enemy within rather than at enemies real or potential without.'⁷

This negative interpretation of the effect of the helots on Sparta is not unanimous, but proponents of alternative views do not always inspire confidence. Many German historians, at least from the mid-nineteenth century through to the end of the Second World War, tended to argue for a more favourable image of Sparta, with the maltreatment of the helots being minimized and their impact on Sparta belittled.⁸ The approach influenced some non-German historians,⁹ but this line of analysis, which in its nineteenth-century manifestations has been dismissed as the product of a 'German bourgeois historiographer',¹⁰ eventually fed the perverted historical constructs of Hitler's Third Reich. There have subsequently been attempts to question the existence of a 'helot danger' by investigating the frequency of revolts and by stressing, perhaps to excess, the distinction between Messenian nationalists and Laconian helots.¹¹ The extent to which 'the class struggle' was really the dominant issue in Sparta has also been queried.¹² This approach can gain support from, though it is certainly not presupposed by, works that emphasize a wider variety of tensions and conflicts within Sparta than a basic helot-Spartiate opposition,¹³ or present the Spartans as more opportunist and less inactive in their foreign relations, particularly in their dealings with Athens.¹⁴ The most recent review of ancient opinions about the helots, by Jean Ducat, although building on an illuminating

investigation of Spartan contempt for helots, has tended to minimalize, or marginalize, stories of maltreatment of helots and to highlight weaknesses and distortions in critical interpretations of Sparta; the Messenian–Laconian division is exploited in the process of massaging the evidence.¹⁵

These two basic approaches to Sparta each have their problems. The more favourable interpretation leads to the glorification of Sparta, and hence perhaps to toleration of authoritarian practices, whether they be those of Nazi Germany or apartheid South Africa at a national level or of an English public school at a more parochial.¹⁶ But the critical approach also has dangers. Contemporary democrats have an inbuilt preference for Athens as a democratic power, and there is something very satisfying about the notion that Sparta, her great rival and destroyer, should herself be fatally flawed, with the mainspring of her economic system containing the worm of her future destruction and her regime of harsh discipline and blind obedience devoted to nothing more than the maintenance of an unpleasant *status quo*. It is precisely because the negative view of Sparta is so attractive that it is worth reviewing the evidence. There is no reason to assume that the Spartans would have accepted the negative view of their system and that, though in certain circumstances their behaviour cast dark shadows that were picked up and elaborated by observers such as Thucydides, Spartans would have shared such interpretations of their society. It was the helot labour force which permitted the existence of Sparta as a free city and, though these labourers might often be treated with brutal disdain, Spartans did not in consequence regard helots as some sort of recurrent problem: helots were a facility rather than a disability, a facility which enabled Spartiates to devote their attentions to the competition for pre-eminence within the citizen body and the Spartan state to be the chief military power on the Greek mainland. Such an assessment should not lead to a favourable or pleasant image of Sparta, unless limited perception in civilian matters and ruthless efficiency in military affairs are seen as desirable qualities.

Xenophon's *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians*

A suitable starting-point for this investigation is provided by Xenophon's *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians*, coupled with modern reactions to its contents. Doubts about the authenticity of the attribution to Xenophon have been resolved, but the unity and date of the work remain in dispute – whether chapter 14 which distinguishes between a well-ordered past and present decline is integral or an afterthought.¹⁷ Fortunately such discussions are not relevant to my purpose, and the important point is that the work was composed by a man with access to good information about Spartan practices and institutions. The professed purpose of the treatise, stated at the beginning, is simple, namely to demonstrate why shortage of manpower, *olig-anthrōpia*, did not prevent Sparta from being the most powerful state in Greece. In this, Xenophon was presumably setting out to resolve an apparent anomaly that perplexed contemporaries: at least since the 420s, Sparta was known to possess limited citizen manpower but was still a great military force. Thus criticism that this *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians* has little detail about the constitution is misguided,¹⁸ since Xenophon attributed Spartans' success to their habits of life, their *epitēdeumata*, 'or what we would call their social institutions; and he was surely right.'¹⁹

Even when placed in the right context, however, Xenophon's work does not have a high reputation: 'an uncritical eulogy, lacking detail and useless for the study of historical development, even omitting (except for one oblique reference: 12 3) the most central feature of the Spartan system, its economic basis and political purpose in the control of a dangerous and numerically far superior serf population.'²⁰ Helots are in fact mentioned *more* than once: the economic role of female slaves in relieving Spartan women of the need to supply clothing (1 4);²¹ the right to use another man's servants, a reflection of the communal aspects of Spartan helotry (6 3); the presence of servants in houses, where they could report if money was being

illegally introduced (7 5); finally, their attendance in Spartan camps, where precautions have to be taken about access to weapons and against absconders (12 2–4).²² Thus the work alludes to certain abnormal aspects of the Spartan helots, such as the liberation of Spartan women from everyday work, or the communal access to helots. Since, however, all major contemporary Greek states relied on citizen armies whose hoplites required slaves or dependant labourers to farm the lands that guaranteed their military status,²³ there was less cause for Xenophon to mention what must have been the main helot activity, agricultural work: a factor common to other Greek states would not explain Sparta's unusual success.

But this argument cannot provide a complete explanation of Xenophon's approach: helot numbers were so great that their contribution to Spartan life could be seen by outsiders as an important element in the Spartan *politeia*, and they are discussed as such by Aristotle in his analysis of Sparta's faults (*Politics* 1269a29 ff.). A thorough or dispassionate analysis of fourth-century Sparta should have said more, but Xenophon, the friend of Agesilaus, may have described the Spartan world as seen by an insider.²⁴ This points to a failing in Murray's criticism, quoted above, namely that it is dangerously circuitous: we do not know that the Spartans themselves believed that a central purpose of their political system was control of the helot majority, any more than an Athenian would have thought that a primary function of their democracy was control of their slaves. Outside observers might attribute motives to Spartans based on their own, intelligent, assessments of Spartan behaviour, but these would not necessarily be the interpretations which Spartans would adopt. Accordingly, I would like to explore the extent to which the image of Sparta reflected by Xenophon is an inside view – Sparta as seen by the Spartans at a time of great success, or shortly after that success (depending on what decision is reached about the date of composition). On this hypothetical inside view helots were regarded as things that had their uses and like any other object, such as a hunting dog (another

communal item: Xenophon, *Const. Lac.* 6 3), required some regular attention; but beyond this they may not have seriously troubled the consciousness of the average Spartiate.

Ancient opinions of Spartan helots

The origins of the helots were much discussed in antiquity, and certainty is impossible.²⁵ Herodotus is the earliest author to use the term *helot*, but Tyrtaeus' comparison (fr. 6 West) of Messenians to asses burdened with heavy loads paying half of their produce to their masters indicates that the Spartans already operated a tough regime of exploitation, which is likely to have applied to Laconian helots in much the same way as to the recently subjugated Messenians.²⁶ A parallel can again be drawn between Spartan attitudes to, or treatment of, animals and helots:²⁷ each existed to be exploited by Spartan citizens, who were conditioned to despise the sub-human helots like animals. There is nothing in Tyrtaeus to suggest that Spartans might have thought such exploitation abnormal in principle, and it is more likely that it was the considerable economic benefit of the half share in Messenian produce for which Tyrtaeus urged his fellow Spartans to fight bravely.

Another reference, of early but uncertain date, which does suggest Spartan concern about Messenians, is the problematic text of part of a Spartan treaty with Tegea that was erected on the banks of the Alpheus, most probably at Olympia;²⁸ it is preserved via Aristotle in Plutarch (*Moralia* 292b with 277b–c). Among its provisions were requirements that they (i.e. the Tegeans) must expel Messenians from the country and that they must not make men *chrēstous* (literally 'good'). Aristotle interpreted the second clause to mean that the Tegeans were not to put to death people for giving help to the pro-Spartan party in Tegea, and it was for this euphemistic sense of *chrēstous* that he twice quoted the treaty. Modern interpretations have followed the argument of Jacoby that the Spartans were preventing the

Tegeans from making the Messenians citizens (literally 'politically useful'), citing as a parallel a seventh-century Cretan inscription from Dreros where a local magistrate who infringes a ban on repetition of office within ten years is to be *akrēstos*.²⁹ There is clearly some force in Jacoby's inscriptional comparison, but it does make Aristotle's own interpretation look extremely bizarre since there would be no obvious motive for his allusion to a party of Laconizers at Tegea. Furthermore, Jacoby assumed that the two surviving clauses of the treaty were grammatically parallel, with the same subject and object, but this need not have been the case. Whatever the precise interpretation of the treaty, a plausible context is provided by the Great Revolt of 465 and the consequent ten-year war in Messenia.³⁰ At this time Spartans were certainly afraid of the Messenians and at odds with Tegea,³¹ and the Spartans were interested in expelling Messenians from the Peloponnese. Moreover, in the fifth century it would be reasonable to postulate the existence of a laconizing group in Tegea, if Aristotle's interpretation of the text is correct. This treaty does not prove the existence of Spartan concern about helots in the sixth century, when other evidence indicates that the Spartans actually wanted more helots (see below).³²

Herodotus was naturally interested in Sparta as the leader of the Greek resistance to the Persians, and he was quite well informed about her: he tells us that he had been to Pitana, the home village of Archias son of Samius and grandson of the hero of the Spartan expedition against Polycrates of Samos, and I see no reason to doubt the truth of this assertion; also it is plausible to speculate that he had talked to Demaretus, the exiled king who now resided in Asia Minor in the vicinity of Pergamum, or at least to members of his family or court, and perhaps also to Cleomenes' daughter Gorgo who appears in two stories (V 51; VII 239). For Herodotus, the helots are simply part of the Spartan landscape, a presence that does not require explanation: they participate in royal funerals (VI 58 3), are in attendance on individual Spartans when on campaign (VII 229 1), may be used to guard the deranged king Cleomenes (VI 75 2),

and are trusted to fight alongside the main contingent of Laconian hoplites (IX 28 2). The 35,000 helots at Plataea, who are stationed to protect the Spartan right, are all said to be prepared for battle (IX 29 1),³³ something which perhaps distinguished them from the other 34,500 light-armed troops in the Greek army (IX 29 2). At Thermopylae, even if one helot fled from the scene after leading his blind master back to the fighting (VII 229 1),³⁴ it appears that some helots remained with Leonidas to the bitter end, since their corpses could be confused with Spartans and Thespians by the Greek sailors in the Persian fleet (VIII 25 1). In all this there is no indication that Spartans saw the helots as a problem: not even when Demaretus advises Xerxes to occupy Cythera is there a suggestion that this could be exploited to foment helot unrest (VII 235). In Herodotus the existence and exploitation of helots are taken for granted, much as in Xenophon's *Constitution*, and there is nothing particularly odd about Sparta that requires explanation.³⁵

A possible explanation for Herodotus' attitude might be derived from the argument of Ducat that the Spartans did not helotize the Messenians until after the Great Revolt, i.e. after 455.³⁶ Herodotus, supposedly, was aware of the distinction between Laconian helots and Messenians, and, since it was the helotized Messenians who thereafter caused the Spartans most trouble, there was no reason for him to comment specifically on relations between Spartans and their Laconian helots. Ducat's theory about the Messenians is flawed. Spartans tended to refer to Messenians as slaves or helots,³⁷ terms which avoided any implication that the Messenians had a special status, and there is no reason to suppose that all Herodotus' references to helots simply denote Laconians: with regard to the 35,000 helots at Plataea it was not important to make a distinction between Laconians and Messenians, and so none is made. On those occasions where Herodotus does use the term 'Messenians' he is alluding to Spartan conflicts in Messenia when it was appropriate to refer to the enemy as Messenians since, as Thucydides

observes (I 101 2), these comprised the majority of the rebel helots in 465:³⁸ the victory predicted by Tisamenus (IX 35 2) was certainly during this revolt, as most probably was the Messenian success at Stenyclarus against Arimnestus and his 300 Spartans (IX 64 2);³⁹ the allusion, in a speech of Aristagoras, to Messenians as equally-balanced opponents (V 49 8), though placed by Herodotus in the context of 499, probably also reflects the fighting of 465–455.⁴⁰ The only other occurrences of the word in Herodotus are with reference to the original conquest of Messenia (III 47 1; or perhaps to the Second War), and to the mythical origins of the Spartan dual kingship (VI 52 5; 7). Herodotus used the specific term ‘Messenian’ where it was appropriate, elsewhere the generic ‘helot’; thus Ducat’s theory does not explain Herodotus’ mild image of Sparta.

If the presentation of Sparta in Herodotus is compatible with that in Xenophon’s *Constitution*, this perspective is at variance with the image of Sparta presented by Thucydides, whose evidence about Sparta and the helots constitutes a cornerstone for critical interpretations. Thucydides’ references to helots can, for the sake of convenience, be grouped into four categories:

- 1) occasions when helots served in Spartan armies – with Brasidas in the north, under Agis in the Peloponnese in 418, and in the force sent to Syracuse;
- 2) references to helot suppliants at the temple of Poseidon, and in the context of Pausanias’ unsuccessful attempt at revolution;
- 3) the great crisis of the Messenian and helot revolt of 465–455;
- 4) the impact on helots of the Athenian capture of Pylos and other subsequent bases around the Peloponnese.

With regard to the first category there is little to be said: in a military crisis the Spartans could find several hundred helots whom they could trust to fight for them as hoplites; their military activity was primarily on campaigns outside the Peloponnese, which might suggest limits to Spartan confidence, though

on the other hand the helots who had served with Brasidas were ultimately, after their liberation, stationed in a border region that Sparta was disputing with Elis, where steadfast loyalty was essential and defection would have been damaging.

In the second category it is difficult to draw conclusions from the limited evidence about the helot suppliants (Thuc. I 128 1):⁴¹ we have no information about why they had taken refuge in the temple, and the fact that the Spartan authorities dragged them from the sanctuary does not prove that they were rebels.⁴² The Pausanias affair (I 131–4) deserves brief comment, though again the facts are far from certain. Pausanias' actions abroad had by the late 470s led to accusations of Medism; his arrogant, remote behaviour, coupled with incidents such as his personal inscription to accompany the tripod dedicated to commemorate the Greek victory at Plataea, would naturally have given rise to suspicions of tyranny, and it is not surprising that he had enemies at Sparta to agitate for his recall and to promote accusations. One such accusation was that he was fomenting rebellion among the helots by promising them freedom and citizenship (I 132 3–4),⁴³ but even this charge did not persuade the ephors to act, and it was only when Pausanias himself was tricked into revealing his treachery with the Persians that they moved to arrest him. If the accusation about Pausanias and the helots was true, and Thucydides specifically asserts that it was, the story suggests not only the weakness of revolutionary fervour on the part of the helots⁴⁴ but more importantly a lack of concern among Spartan authorities over agitation among the helots – tyrannical behaviour by an individual Spartan grandee and intrigue with the Persians were more potent concerns.⁴⁵ If, contrary to Thucydides, the accusation were false, it would suggest that Pausanias' enemies, in their eagerness to label him as a tyrant, saw the helots as a group whose interests he might plausibly be represented as championing; but in this case they misjudged the authorities' unease about the helots. Either way the story indicates a certain absence of concern about helots in the decade before the Great Revolt;⁴⁶ this confidence is also

revealed by Spartan willingness to interfere against Athens on behalf of Thasos in 465, immediately before the Great Revolt (Thuc. I 101 1–2).

Thucydides' allusions to this helot revolt and the ten-year Messenian war which followed the destructive earthquake of 465 are more straightforward:⁴⁷ this was a desperate crisis, and the Spartans revealed this to the Greek world at large by appealing for help not only to members of the Peloponnesian League such as Aegina but even to Athens, against whom they had recently been contemplating military action at the request of Thasos; the appearance of a frightened Spartan asking for help was sufficiently memorable to be recalled on the Athenian stage fifty years later.⁴⁸ The Spartans appeared to have revealed a significant internal weakness that enemies could attempt to exploit against them.

For Athens this opportunity came with the Peloponnesian War, though no attempt was made until the seventh year of hostilities when Demosthenes fortified Pylos. Thucydides alludes to discussions in the Athenian fleet at Pylos about the merits of the proposal, which was greeted with considerable scepticism (IV 3–4); similar discussions had presumably occurred at Athens in which Thucydides, as a politically active citizen who was soon to be a general, is likely to have taken sides. Spartan reactions were mixed: in Sparta the enterprise was belittled (IV 5 1), though the news of the fortification was apparently one of the reasons for king Agis curtailing his invasion of Attica in that year – it was perhaps a more honourable pretext than the bad weather and shortage of provisions that were also troubling the Spartan army (IV 5–6). The outcome of these events is famous,⁴⁹ and it was this which prompted Thucydides' most revealing comments about Spartans and helots.

The key passage is IV 80, where Spartan enthusiasm for Brasidas' expedition to Thrace is linked with their problems in the Peloponnese, admittedly anticipated problems which did not materialize. Thucydides refers to Spartan fear of the lack of co-operation (*skaiotēta*) and numbers of helots, and comments

that 'most matters for the Spartans with regard to the helots were always for the most part established with a view to security.'⁵⁰ He then narrates the story about the elimination of the 2,000 boldest helots, a story which encapsulates Thucydides' opinions about Spartan fear of helots, and their cruelty and deception.⁵¹

This incident, the reality of which has been questioned,⁵² is cited as an example of Spartan irrationality and paradoxical behaviour, with fear driving them to massacre some helots but also to arm others and send them away from Spartan control,⁵³ or as an impressive demonstration of Spartan organization and skill in their control of the helots.⁵⁴ This last suggestion is worth developing. In its context the story poses severe chronological difficulties: the Spartan appeal to deserving helots to volunteer for freedom appears to have followed the Athenian success at Pylos in 425 and the crisis for Spartan morale that this caused,⁵⁵ but Thucydides also treats it as an antecedent, of an unstated period of time, to the recruitment of helots for service with Brasidas in Thrace in 424. The massacre of the 2,000 volunteers would, however, have necessitated 'a long convalescence' for Spartan-helot relations,⁵⁶ for which there was clearly insufficient time before more volunteers were enrolled for service with Brasidas.⁵⁷

Some thought should be given to how Thucydides discovered the secret of this massacre. It has been plausibly suggested that the Spartans were adept at controlling information about themselves, that they had a clear notion of what it was appropriate for others to know, and that on occasions Thucydides had problems in finding information and may have been misled by a Spartan 'party-line'.⁵⁸ If the story of the 2,000 helots were a Spartan invention, it might fit into this pattern. The Spartans were only too aware of Athenian plans to provoke unrest in Messenia by using Pylos as a base for Messenian exiles, plans that reflected Athenian hopes that a renewed bout of the fear shown by the Spartans in the 460s could be triggered.⁵⁹ This threat could be countered on two levels, directly by a rigorous watch on the

vicinity of Pylos, and indirectly by revealing to the Athenians both the gullible loyalty to Sparta of most helots and the ruthless efficiency of the Spartans in maintaining their control. Thucydides chose to present the story as corroboration of Spartan fears, but his judgments are not beyond question,⁶⁰ and this need not have been the intention of the Spartans in divulging the story. Suspicions of Spartan invention cannot, however, be substantiated.⁶¹ If the story was true, the ability of the Spartans to attract helots both for service with Brasidas and for enlistment as *neodamōdeis* (a category of helot liberated in return for military service that had been instituted some time before 421: Thucydides V 34 1) is noteworthy,⁶² since the disappearance of the 2,000 volunteers did not apparently deter other helots from responding to similar offers of freedom: the Spartans would thereby have achieved a reversal of traditional 'carrot and stick' methods of control.⁶³ If, as I am inclined to believe, the story was untrue, it was still an incident in which Thucydides believed and expected his readers to believe, in that it accorded with Athenian perceptions of Sparta.

The Pylos episode and its aftermath did reveal fear in Sparta (cf. IV 41 3; 55 1), and the Spartans did not attempt to conceal this from their Athenian enemies: in the armistice of 423 it was agreed that neither side was to receive deserters, whether free or slave, and in the Peace of Nicias the intent of this clause was made explicit in the provision that the Athenians would assist the Spartans in the event of a slave uprising (IV 118 7; V 23 3: ἡ δουλεία ἐπανιστῆται)⁶⁴ Circumstances had made the Spartans afraid that the helots, perhaps especially the Messenians, would revolt as they had done in the past (V 14 3), an allusion to the Great Revolt of 465;⁶⁵ the Athenians had helped to create this fear by their initiatives at Pylos and Cythera, and they were now being required to contribute to its elimination. Clearly the Athenians were aware of this fear, and subsequently tried to exploit it by establishing a post on the mainland opposite Cythera in 413 (VII 26 2), an initiative that may have been less successful than they had hoped.⁶⁶

This period of fear in the 420s, even when coupled with the events of the 460s, does not prove that this was a persistent Spartan attitude towards the helots.⁶⁷ Sparta survived both these crises, and on each occasion survival perhaps reinforced the Spartans' belief in their own security and control.⁶⁸ Thucydides, however, familiar with both these events and the ways in which Athenians imagined they could exploit them, constructed generalizations about Spartans and helots on this specific basis.⁶⁹ It is characteristic of Thucydides to deduce motivation from particular behaviour, and then to introduce into his narrative expressions of these motives, so that the historical narrative which he creates naturally supports his own opinions.⁷⁰ But judgments based on behaviour during a particular crisis, when there was a real threat to the normal Spartan mechanisms for controlling the helots, might not be generally valid: the historian extrapolated from the particular to the general in a way that we may not want to follow.

One final observation might be made before leaving Thucydides and his picture of the helots: in his general introduction to Sparta and Athens in Book I, Thucydides does not explicitly mention the helots as a factor contributing to the general slowness of the Spartan reactions to Athenian imperialism.⁷¹ Although this omission might reflect the fact that Sparta is primarily introduced to the reader through the speeches of the Corinthians and Pericles, there should have been occasion for editorial comment, perhaps in the context of Sparta's failure to honour her promise to the Thasians, if Thucydides regarded Spartan fear of helots as significant for their external behaviour.⁷² Thucydides' silence in Book I is obviously compatible with the suggestion that the gloomy image of relations in Book IV is a judgment generated by short-term factors.

It is difficult to place Thucydides' views in context. Of his contemporaries, apart from an aside in the 'Old Oligarch' to the effect that in Sparta slaves feared their masters in contrast to the disgraceful lack of order in Athens,⁷³ only the fragments of Critias' *Spartan Constitution* are of relevance, especially fr. 37.

This fragment, quoted by Libanius in the fourth century AD (*Oration* 25 63), begins with the assertion that at Sparta men are most enslaved and free,⁷⁴ which Libanius then attempts to disprove by citing Critias' own remarks about Spartan precautions – removable shield armbands, always carrying a spear when on campaign, and special locks – to prove that the Spartans were too afraid of helots to be free. The rhetorical context in Libanius is important,⁷⁵ and it is likely that his citation has distorted the original purport of Critias' observations. Ducat has gone so far as to claim that the removable armband was a sensible measure to ensure that this part of the shield could be quickly replaced, with archaeological parallels from Cyprus, and that the locks would have been to protect Spartan property in their owners' absence, perhaps even from thieving Spartiate youths subject to the trials of the *agōgē*, rather than to prevent helot attacks on occupied houses.⁷⁶ Regardless of the truth of this interpretation, it is not easy to generalize from Critias' allusions to certain specific actions.⁷⁷ Critias' general remark about the extremes of slavery and freedom at Sparta, the remark which prompted Libanius' reaction, might indicate that he anticipated the presentation in Xenophon's *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians* of Sparta as a place where helots did not impinge on the consciousness or conscience of the citizens: at Sparta men were most free, an ideal state of affairs for a citizen body, so that Sparta would appear as worthy of praise. If Critias accepted the Aristotelian view that 'it is the characteristic of a free man that he does not live under the restraint of another' (*Rhetoric* I 9 27; 1367a32), which has been described as 'a nearly universal Greek notion', then it is difficult to see how he could have accepted that the most free men of Sparta were restricted in their activities by the helots who provided their freedom:⁷⁸ slaves were probably no more significant for Critias' analysis of Sparta than for the average Spartiate.⁷⁹

This brings the investigation back to Xenophon. Like Herodotus and Thucydides he mentions several occasions when helots served in Spartan armies, including the enrolment of

6,000 during the crisis of Epaminondas' invasion in 369 (*Hellenica* VI 5 28–9); although the Spartans were initially frightened by the sheer numbers of volunteers, they were reassured by the arrival of other allies. The helots seem to have fought loyally, whereas there was agitation from other groups inside Sparta which even included some Spartiates.⁸⁰ The most important passage in Xenophon, however, is his account of the Cinadon conspiracy (*Hellenica* III 3), our most informative narrative about internal conditions at Sparta with references to various inferior groups within the state and to an otherwise unknown 'Little Assembly'. Cinadon, attempting to win a recruit for his conspiracy, presents a picture of fierce hatred towards the Spartiate élite on the part of helots, *neodamōdeis*, *hypomeiones*, and *perioikoi* who are said to relish the prospect of eating Spartans raw. But the would-be recruit prefers to tell the Spartan authorities, who rapidly arrest Cinadon and identify the ringleaders.

Considerable claims have been made about the insights provided by this account,⁸¹ but it is essential to remember that Cinadon was probably magnifying the extent of hostility,⁸² and that the affair was crushed quickly without apparent repercussions.⁸³ Cartledge has suggested that the story had a literary function in Xenophon's work, to reveal the extent of Spartan *oliganthrōpia*, the insecure manpower base for the Spartan empire which Agesilaus sets about extending in the very next chapter of the *Hellenica*.⁸⁴ The suggestion is interesting, since it implies that the story may not be a straight image of Sparta, but a more plausible literary function is the display of the importance of divine favour for Sparta at the start of Agesilaus' reign: the plot is discovered as a result of unfavourable sacrifices, when the seer proclaimed to Agesilaus that it was 'as if we are among the enemy themselves'.⁸⁵ The gods are shown to be protecting Sparta at a time when she is behaving properly. Xenophon did not consider manpower to be a key Spartan problem, or at least in his *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians* he shows how the Spartans were not affected by apparent shortages, whereas

divine favour accords with his views on moral decline at Sparta.⁸⁶

Thus in much of the Cinadon narrative we have a story told for a purpose, both by the informer and by the historian, and the most illuminating part is perhaps the section describing Cinadon's arrest (III 3 8–9): Cinadon, though an Inferior, is apparently to command some Spartan youths in an expedition to Aulon to arrest certain inhabitants and helots and to bring back a local beauty who had been corrupting all Spartans who went there, young and old alike; Cinadon had performed such tasks for the ephors before. This presents an interesting picture of Sparta in action: we do not know what had been happening at Aulon, a place of uncertain location in north-west Messenia,⁸⁷ but the problem was perhaps not critical since the ephors decide to arrest various people, helots as well as locals (presumably of perioikic status), rather than to execute them outright, which was the likely reaction to rebellion in Messenia;⁸⁸ Spartans at the place had allowed themselves to be diverted by a woman, and so an Inferior is sent to restore control. One might conclude that policing Messenia was a sufficiently routine business that it was entrusted to men below the status of full Spartiate, while Spartans, perhaps even Spartiates,⁸⁹ were so oblivious of their responsibilities that they were seduced by the local beauty. It might seem that Spartan authorities were particularly concerned about the possibility of disaffection in levels of society above the helots. Such men, who could provide leadership and acquire support by offering rewards to the disadvantaged, were dealt with promptly, though also publicly to provide a warning to others: Cinadon and his fellow conspirators are paraded through the streets of Sparta, being whipped and goaded, a punishment that they presumably were not intended to survive.⁹⁰

Xenophon composed at least part of the *Hellenica* in the knowledge that his favoured Sparta had thoroughly betrayed her reputation as liberator of the Greeks, been defeated by the Thebans at Leuctra, and suffered the loss of Messenia and the

disintegration of the Peloponnesian League. The fourth-century failure of Sparta is a fact that affects her treatment in Aristotle and Plato, since explanations had to be found. Information about the helots in Plato is limited: he describes the *krypteia* as an element in Spartan military training (*Laws* 633b–c), a version that has to be reconciled with Aristotle's account; he justifies a statement that man is a troublesome possession by referring to the frequent revolts of the Messenians (*Laws* 777b–c), and introducing his discussion of slavery he states that 'of all [slaves] in Greece the helotry of the Spartans would probably provide the most dispute and controversy for those who say and those who deny that it is good' (*Laws* 776c). The last passage is of interest in indicating that contemporary Greeks had some knowledge of, and strong views about, helots, especially after the liberation of Messenia.⁹¹ slaves and their treatment were a current topic of intellectual discussions.⁹²

There is more discussion in Aristotle. The analysis in *Politics* II 9 (1269a29 ff.), where Aristotle is attempting to identify as many faults as possible in the Spartan system when measured against a theoretical ideal, suffers from the burden of hindsight. For Aristotle the first weakness to be considered is the helots, who are portrayed as 'constantly waiting, as it were, in ambush for their disasters' (1269a37–8). The image is an extrapolation from the events of 465–455, the 420s, and perhaps also the 360s: these upheavals in the Spartan state provide the basis for the observation, but do not necessarily corroborate it as a general truth of Spartan perceptions of the helots.⁹³ Aristotle then makes various generalizations about the burdens of supervising slaves,⁹⁴ introducing the antithesis of too lax or too harsh treatment which is already present in the discussion of slavery in the 'Old Oligarch', before turning to the question of Spartan women. It is noticeable that women receive much more attention from Aristotle than the helots,⁹⁵ and that the women are presented as a damaging influence on Sparta in both war and peace, something that is not said about the helots.⁹⁶ The critical context of the remarks has to be remembered.

The other crucial Aristotelian passage on Spartans and helots is the information preserved by Plutarch (*Lycurgus* 28) concerning the *krypteia*: on occasion the ephors send out certain youths, provided only with daggers and scant provisions; by day they keep themselves concealed, but at night they come down to the roads and kill any helots they find; the passage concludes with the ephors' annual declaration of war on the helots.⁹⁷ At least as recounted in Plutarch, the passage is influenced, if not distorted, by the Thucydidean story of the 2,000 helots, which is quoted to illustrate the assertion about killing the strongest helots.⁹⁸ Unfortunately, the other very limited evidence about the *krypteia* provides little illumination: Plato (*Laws* 633b) asserts that the institution was a form of training in endurance, and makes no mention of the killing of helots; a scholiast on this passage adds that the young men, who were sent out individually, had to remain invisible for a year, and provided for themselves by theft.

The *krypteia* has fascinated scholars for its shocking brutality as much as its obscurity, especially since the study by Jeanmaire who enticingly presented the institution as a *rite de passage* for Spartiate youths, on the basis of various anthropological parallels, mostly from African tribes.⁹⁹ the young Spartiate is blooded through the murder of a helot, which is presented as the central aspect of the *krypteia*, one that sources were embarrassed to mention.¹⁰⁰ The argument and comparisons are very seductive, but do not alter the fundamental limitations to our information about the *krypteia*, so that it is dangerous to construct arguments on the assumption that we know what it really was.¹⁰¹ One difficulty is that the available evidence about the *krypteia* does not really fit the anthropological parallels: it would appear to have been an intermittent rather than an annual institution,¹⁰² it was not endured by all Spartiates, since Spartan authorities only sent out those who appeared to be particularly intelligent (Plutarch *Lyc.* 28), and we do not know that those who passed through it were subsequently grouped in a special corps; the nocturnal murder of helots is not presented as an obligatory execution of a

single helot by each Spartiate within the *krypteia* – some may have killed far more, while others may have killed none.¹⁰³ Thus, even if it originated in a traditional *rite de passage*, it had lost this function by the time other Greeks became aware of it,¹⁰⁴ and the notion of a quaint survival of an archaic ritual should not prejudice reactions to the practice. Another weakness in Jeanmaire's hypothesis is his dismissal of Plato's explanation of the *krypteia* as a form of training: just because Spartiates would spend most of their time fighting as hoplites in disciplined ranks does not prove that other forms of training in endurance and living off the land were not thought beneficial.¹⁰⁵ There is insufficient evidence for the nature of the institution to be certain: it might on occasions have functioned as a sort of police force,¹⁰⁶ and have been used to enforce a curfew against helots,¹⁰⁷ but if so its irregularity would suggest that these were not constant concerns for the authorities or that the authorities had other, and preferred, methods for achieving these ends. The *krypteia* plays a prominent part in modern analyses of Sparta and the Spartan system, but is a shaky basis for generalizations: it illustrates the brutality of Spartans and the harsh condition of the helots, but these were already known.

The last point that Plutarch extracts from Aristotle is the ephors' annual declaration of war on the helots, which supposedly removed the ritual pollution that murder would otherwise bring.¹⁰⁸ This has been described as 'perhaps the most remarkable piece of evidence of the implacable hostility between Spartans and helots',¹⁰⁹ although it is also conceded that it was probably intended against the Messenian helots in particular.¹¹⁰ We do not know how ancient this declaration was: it might have been a practice instituted as late as the 460s when all helots seemed threatening, and continued thereafter, to assume new significance after the liberation of Messenia presented the Spartans with a permanent enemy whom they persisted in regarding as slaves.

After the fourth century fresh evidence about the helots is scarce, and much of that is influenced by the dramatic changes

at Sparta under the reforming kings Agis IV and Cleomenes III.¹¹¹ The most relevant is a fragment from Myron of Priene which records various degrading practices to which helots were subjected: they had to wear a cap made of animal skin,¹¹² were subjected to a certain number of beatings each year to remind them of their servitude, and might be killed if they were thought to be too vigorous. The isolation of the fragment again makes interpretation difficult,¹¹³ though Ducat has observed that Myron was primarily concerned with the Messenians and their history.¹¹⁴ All the same, institutionalized mechanisms for reinforcing Spartiate contempt are entirely credible and accord well with Plutarch's information about the deliberate intoxication of helots in the Spartan common messes as a prelude to displays of demeaning behaviour (*Lyc.* 28).

The choice between shadows

It is time to return to the initial issue, to the conflict between the negative and positive interpretations of Sparta in modern commentators, a disagreement which can be traced back to the two distinct shadows that Sparta cast on ancient observers, and to consider whether a review of the evidence permits more refined conclusions. There should be no doubt that helots were cruelly exploited: even if individual incidents may be queried, such as the massacre of the 2,000 volunteers in Thucydides or the precise nature of the *krypteia*, the evidence corroborates the judgments of the Laconophile Critias that the condition of slaves in Sparta was extreme,¹¹⁵ and of the Old Oligarch that Spartan slaves feared their masters. But it is debatable what effect the helots, vastly superior in numbers to their overlords, had on Sparta: is it safe to conclude that the helots were the persistent problem that distorted the whole Spartan way of life, compelling them to maintain their rigidly controlled social system, preventing them from indulging in adventurous foreign activities, and dominating their lives with a constant threat of revolt?

In favour of the negative interpretation of Sparta is the evidence and judgment of Thucydides: as an intelligent observer and determined investigator he might have discovered aspects of Sparta that escaped the notice of visitors like Herodotus or Xenophon, particularly since the latter was favourably disposed towards Sparta. Sparta was, after all, renowned for her secrecy, and it would naturally be a priority to prevent the diffusion of information that was damaging to Spartan interests, but Thucydidean persistence might penetrate her defences and reveal the secret of the helot problem. This approach is largely supported by the analysis of Aristotle, who placed control of the helots first in his list of Spartan weaknesses, and finds proof in the succession of revolts. Thus the two most intelligent ancient sources, Thucydides and Aristotle, support the negative interpretation. But intelligent judgments need not be right or universally valid, and this may be true of Sparta. Both authors were deeply influenced by the shadow of Spartan problems, by the Great Revolt of the 460s, the reactions to Pylos, and (in Aristotle's case) the liberation of Messenia: their opinions of Sparta were formed by these crises and may have been less generally valid than they imagined. It is dangerous to extrapolate from them to impressions about Sparta held by 'other Greeks',¹¹⁶ and our own understanding of Sparta has perhaps been distorted by judgments made by observers at times of crisis.¹¹⁷

It is therefore worth at least considering the possibility that Herodotus and Xenophon may have presented Sparta in Spartan terms more accurately. Such an interpretation would accept the centrality of helot exploitation to the Spartan way of life, but would argue that whatever 'class struggle' may have been in progress in Sparta this did not impinge on Spartan perceptions: there were several practices designed to inculcate and reinforce contempt for helots and demonstrate Spartan superiority, but the helots were not seen as an overriding problem for the system. As in all Greek states man was an awkward commodity (Plato, *Laws* 777b), which meant that regular precautions had to be taken especially in view of the large helot numbers, but in

spite of occasional revolts Spartans expected that most of the helots most of the time would be malleable, bribable, or subject to fear and discipline. Helots in Messenia were certainly more prone to revolt than those in Laconia, as shown by their behaviour on various occasions in the century after 465, since, quite apart from Messenian memory of a national identity, the intensity of Spartan control will have decreased as distance from Sparta increased.¹¹⁸ In Messenia there may even have been intermittent or low-level unrest that was too minor or normal to be noted in our limited sources,¹¹⁹ but the problems were not so great that the Spartans ever regarded control of Messenia as anything other than advantageous.¹²⁰ Whether this state of affairs, either in Laconia or Messenia, amounted to 'the acquiescence of the helots'¹²¹ is beyond the scope of proof: volunteering for military service in the hope of rewards was probably compatible with reluctant obedience and sullen subservience in peacetime.¹²²

This approach has some merits. Thucydidean opinions are not infallible, and it has been observed that where independent testimony is available to check Thucydides' statements 'the usual outcome is not renewed confidence but doubt.'¹²³ Reasonable doubts can be raised about a variety of evidence or opinions in Thucydides, from such specific items as the size of the initial tribute of the Delian League to broader matters of judgment such as the causes of the Peloponnesian War, the abilities of Pericles' successors, or the qualities of the regime of the 5,000. Thucydides was a great historian, but there are weaknesses in the hypothesis that his superior determination and intelligence allowed him to discover the closely-guarded secret of Sparta. He fails to mention one of the central tenets of modern criticisms of Sparta, namely the restrictive effect that fear of the helots had on Spartan foreign activity, a theory which would have been relevant to his analysis of Spartan slowness in Book I. Furthermore, the 'secret' which he is supposed to have discovered was not closely-guarded: after the helot revolt of 465 the Spartans publicly appealed for help to Athens and to the Peloponnesian League, and Spartan treaties would include provisions about

the Messenians and even, in the Peace of Nicias, an explicit provision for help in case of a slave revolt. The Athenians attempted to exploit this apparent Spartan weakness through the fortification of Pylos and other sites around the Peloponnese, but they had limited success in provoking unrest among helots.¹²⁴

It must be accepted that for a considerable portion of their history Spartans regarded helots as a desirable commodity of which they wanted more. This is revealed not only by the initial conquest of Messenia, but by the attempt to subjugate and annex Tegea in the mid-sixth century which ended in failure at the Battle of the Chains (Herodotus I 66), and probably also by their expansion into the Thyreatis, the border region between Laconia and Argos, in the 540s.¹²⁵ The Spartan system, whose evolution, whatever the disputes about its various stages, was largely complete by the mid-sixth century, had come about in response to a series of military challenges. It was a military system designed to improve the state's success in wars with Messenia, Argos, and Arcadia: the young men, the future hoplites, were brought up to be brave, tough and competitive, with role models supplied to them from the conversations in the common messes about great men and their deeds; public humiliation for cowards and weaklings reinforced the message. When Plutarch writes that Spartans thought that their state was particularly held together by fear, it is clear that he is thinking of fear of reproach and dread of disgrace, not of the helots.¹²⁶

This system was not created to control the helots,¹²⁷ and it is a fundamental weakness of negative interpretations of Sparta that they attempt to explain everything unusual about her by reference to a simple hypothesis of a 'helot problem'. The system was obviously capable of being diverted against internal enemies when the need occasionally arose, but for most of its history the Spartan machine was brutally efficient in serving its purpose of maximizing Spartan power. I would suggest that the Spartans' training was sufficiently effective to prevent them from identifying the helots as a critical problem: they were superior, the

helots inferior, an attitude that might seem naive, but is not implausible for that reason.¹²⁸ It was perhaps this conditioning that contributed to the extreme shock when problems arose – they were simply unexpected: the famous fear of the Spartan envoy requesting assistance from Athens in the 460s, has its counterpart in the reactions to the disaster on Sphacteria. On the latter occasion Spartan overconfidence contributed to the severity of their reaction,¹²⁹ and it is reasonable to postulate a comparable attitude towards the helots. For the average Spartiate helots, like the Athenians, were there to be beaten.

Plausibility rather than truth has been suggested as the best goal for discussions about Sparta,¹³⁰ and the evidence for the helots certainly permits no more. Two distinct shadows were cast in antiquity. I have attempted to argue that, whatever the attractions of the notion of a Sparta hoist with its own petard of rebellious helots, there are weaknesses in the evidence which should be recognized by those who will continue to be drawn by this view. I prefer the alternative of a Sparta whose citizens were sufficiently arrogant to believe the myths of their own superiority: what problems there were could be dealt with by the likes of the Inferior Cinadon while citizens disported themselves with the beautiful lady of Aulon.

Notes

- 1 I am deeply indebted to my colleague Michel Austin for his encouragement to pursue my interest in Sparta, and for his discussion, advice, and comments at various stages in the composition; also to Stephen Hodgkinson for criticism and advice on an earlier version, and to Anton Powell for constructively sceptical editorship. Paul Cartledge generously read the paper, providing detailed comments as well as an advance copy of his response to the article of Richard Talbert (see n. 12); his criticisms have led me to rethink the presentation of some key arguments, although our views obviously

- remain at odds. None of these scholars, of course, is responsible for the opinions expressed here.
- 2 G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (London 1972) 91, 292.
 - 3 G. Grundy, *Thucydides and the History of his Age* vol. I, 2nd edn (Oxford 1949) 219, quoted by de Ste. Croix, op. cit., 93.
 - 4 M.I. Finley, 'Was Greek civilization based on slave labour?', *Historia* 8 (1959), 145–64 at 158–9; reprinted in M.I. Finley (ed.) *Slavery in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge 1960) 53–72 at 66–7; also in his *Economy and Society in Ancient Greece* (London 1981) 97–115 at 109.
 - 5 Paul Cartledge, *Sparta and Lakonia* (London 1979) 177.
 - 6 P. Huart, 'L'épisode de Pylos-Sphactérie dans Thucydide: sa répercussion à Sparte', *Annales Fac. Lettres de Nice* 11 (1970) 27–45 at 38.
 - 7 M.I. Finley, 'Sparta and Spartan Society', cited from the English translation in his *Economy and Society*, 24–40 at 39.
 - 8 For surveys of German scholarship, see Elizabeth Rawson, *The Spartan Tradition in European Thought* (Oxford 1969) ch. 19, and specifically on the helots P. Oliva, 'On the problem of the helots', *Historica* 3 (1961) 5–34.
 - 9 E.g., H. Michell, *Sparta* (Cambridge 1952) ch. 3, esp. 79–84.
 - 10 Oliva's verdict (art. cit., 5–7) on C.O. Müller, *Die Dorier* (Breslau 1824).
 - 11 A. Roobaert, 'Le danger hilote?', *Ktema* 2 (1977) 141–55.
 - 12 R.J.A. Talbert, 'The role of the helots in the class struggle at Sparta', *Historia* 38 (1989) 22–40, an article that specifically confronts Paul Cartledge's conception of Sparta; some of Talbert's arguments are already presented in G.L. Cawkwell, 'The decline of Sparta', *CQ* 33 (1983) 385–400 at 390–5. For a response to some of Talbert's arguments, see Paul Cartledge, 'Richard Talbert's revision of the Spartan-helot struggle: a reply', *Historia* 40 (1991); I am most grateful to the author for a copy in advance of publication.
 - 13 Stephen Hodkinson, 'Social order and the conflict of values in classical Sparta', *Chiron* 13 (1983) 239–81.

- 14 Anton Powell, *Athens and Sparta* (London 1988) 118–28; for fuller development of the arguments, see idem, ‘Athens’ difficulty, Sparta’s opportunity: causation and the Peloponnesian War’, *L’Antiquité classique* 49 (1980) 87–114.
- 15 J. Ducat, *Les Hilotes*, *Bulletin de Correspondance hellénique*, supplément 20 (Paris 1990); ‘Le mépris des Hilotes’, *Annales* 30 (1974) 1451–64.
- 16 Rawson, ch. 20, esp. pp. 362–7; and cf. also Anton Powell, ‘Mendacity and Sparta’s use of the visual’ in *Classical Sparta: Techniques Behind Her Success*, A. Powell (ed.) (London 1989) 173–92 at 174 with allusion to T. Rutherford Harley, ‘The public school of Sparta’, *Greece and Rome* 3 (1934) 129–39.
- 17 For brief discussions of the issues, see Douglas M. MacDowell, *Spartan Law* (Edinburgh 1986) 8–14, Paul Cartledge, *Agesilaos and the Crisis of Sparta* (London 1987) 56–7, both with references to earlier treatments. For recent analysis of the work, especially in terms of its rhetorical structure, see Gerald Proietti, *Xenophon’s Sparta, an Introduction*, *Mnemosyne Supplement* 98 (1987) ch. 4.
- 18 E.g., J.T. Hooker, ‘Spartan propaganda’ in *Classical Sparta* (n. 16), 122–41 at 137.
- 19 A. Andrewes, ‘The government of classical Sparta’ in *Ancient Society and Institutions: Studies Presented to Victor Ehrenberg on his 75th Birthday* (Oxford 1966) 1–20 at 17.
- 20 Oswyn Murray, *Early Greece* (Glasgow 1980) 167.
- 21 I assume that references to slaves, *douloi*, and servants, *oiketai*, denote helots, or at least include helots along with other categories of slaves.
- 22 The influence on this passage of Critias fr. 37 has been noted, e.g., by Ducat *Hilotes* 46, 148.
- 23 For discussion of the extent of slave-owning at Athens, see Michael H. Jameson, ‘Agriculture and slavery in classical Athens’, *CJ* 73 (1977–8) 122–45; also G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World* (London 1981) App. II, 505–6; Ian Morris, *Burial and Ancient Society* (Cambridge 1987) 174–5; and in general Finley, ‘Civilization’

- (see n. 4) 148–9 = 56–7. The thesis of widespread ownership is challenged by Ellen Meiksens Wood, *Peasant-Citizen and Slave, The Foundations of Athenian Democracy* (London 1988) ch. 2, though her discussion of the sparse evidence, even if it were accepted, would still permit the conclusion that most people of hoplite status at Athens could have exploited the labour of slaves in agriculture. Aristotle (*Politics* I 2–4; 1252a24 ff.) assumes that slaves are a normal part of households, except for the poor.
- 24 Xenophon was aware of the enormous disparity between the tiny Spartiate elite and the mass of helots, *perioikoi* and people of inferior status, as is revealed in the Cinadon narrative (*Hell.* III 3; discussed below). But Cinadon failed, and even after Leuctra nothing was done to increase the small number of citizens: Sparta was still a military power, and remained so until the revolt of Agis against Alexander, so that Spartans might not yet have accepted the assessments by outsiders such as Aristotle that *oliganthrōpia* was their real problem.
 - 25 For discussion, see Ducat, *Hilotes*, ch. 1; also 'Aspects de l'hilotisme', *Ancient Society* 9 (1978) 5–46.
 - 26 Thus I accept the standard interpretation of this fragment of Tyrtaeus (e.g., Cartledge, *Sparta*, 119). Ducat, *Hilotes*, 59–61, has attempted to argue from the context in Pausanias (IV 14 4–5) in which this fragment is preserved that Tyrtaeus was describing Messenians subjected by Sparta but not turned into helots; this accords with his theory that the Messenians were not helotized until c. 450 (for which see below).
 - 27 A standard Greek term for slaves was 'man-footed things', *andrapoda*, as pointed out by F.D. Harvey, 'Herodotus and the man-footed creature' in L.J. Archer (ed.), *Slavery and Other Forms of Unfree Labour* (London 1988) 42–52.
 - 28 Suggested as a possibility by L.H. Jeffery, *Archaic Greece* (London 1976) 131 n. 6; display of a treaty at a major shrine was standard practice, and Olympia is a much more

- plausible location than some unknown place on the joint frontier, as suggested by W.G. Forrest, *A History of Sparta 950–192 B.C.* (London 1968) 79.
- 29 F. Jacoby, 'Χρηστοὺς ποιεῖν (Aristotle fr. 592R)' *CR* 38 (1944) 15–16. The Dreros inscription = Meiggs-Lewis, *GHI* no. 2.
 - 30 The duration of the war is an intractable problem: see, e.g., de Ste. Croix, (n. 2 above) 181. I would accept the Thucydidean evidence for a ten-year war (I 103 1), but for discussion of alternatives see A.W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides* (Oxford 1945) vol. I, 302–3, 401–11.
 - 31 Tegea twice unsuccessfully fought Sparta (Herodotus IX 35), first in alliance with Argos probably in the late 470s, and then at Dipaea with most of the other Arcadians, probably after the outbreak of the helot revolt.
 - 32 Jacoby preferred a date in the mid-sixth century, on the grounds that *chrēstous* in the sense of citizen must have been a rare archaism which Aristotle would have been less likely to have misunderstood if it was still in use in the fifth century; even if Jacoby's interpretation is right and Aristotle's wrong, a fifth-century date is entirely plausible.
 - 33 This comment undermines the interpretation of K.-W. Welwei, *Unfreie im antiken Kriegsdienst I: Athen und Sparta* (Wiesbaden 1974) 120–7, who argues that these helots were batmen with a special responsibility for supplying the army; for refutation, see Ducat, *Hilotes* 157–8.
 - 34 Ducat, 'Mépris' 1453–4, thought this anecdote, which contrasts a brave Spartiate with a cowardly helot, too symbolic to be real, but this is excessive subtlety.
 - 35 Cf. the observation of Rawson, *Heritage* 20 (with reference to Herodotus VII 102–4), that in 'a political and moral contrast between Greeks and Persians...Sparta stands, if only implicitly, for the most typically Greek of cities.'
 - 36 Ducat, *Hilotes* 141–4.
 - 37 Thucydides V 23 3; Isocrates *Archidamos* 28, 88, 96.
 - 38 Cartledge regularly interprets this reference to Messenians

in a general way, to mean that 'most Helots were the descendants of the ancient Messenians' (*Agesilaos*, 14–15; cf. *Sparta*, 177, and 'Rebels and *sambos* in classical Greece: a comparative view', in P. Cartledge and F.D. Harvey (eds), *Crux* (Exeter 1985) 16–46 at 41). Thucydides' statement, however, relates to the specific context of the revolt (see, e.g., Ducat, 'Aspects', 28; Oliva, *Sparta*, 153–4), when the involvement of some Laconian helots is implied by the story of how Archidamus' quick thinking saved Sparta from immediate attack (Diodorus XI 63 6–64 1; Plutarch, *Cimon* 16 4): thus it was appropriate for Thucydides to note that most of the helots in revolt were Messenians (for what it is worth, Diodorus distinguishes between the Messenian rebels and helots). Nevertheless, Messenian helots may have been more numerous if there was more fertile land in Messenia than Laconia (Cartledge, *Sparta*, 96), though this argument would be weakened if helots were in widespread use among perioikic communities (as Ducat, *Hilotes*, 189–91).

- 39 There is no reason to suppose that this must have been a battle between hoplites, as Ducat, *Hilotes*, 141: on suitable terrain an irregular force, armed for example with stones, might overcome a contingent of hoplites. Two dedications of inscribed spear butts, one at Olympia recording victory over Spartans and the other at the precinct of Apollo Corythus near Corone in Messenia for a victory over Athenians, are plausibly connected with the military operations of the revolt by Robert A. Bauslaugh, 'Messenian dialect and dedications of the "Methanioi"', *Hesperia* 59 (1990) 661–8; cf. Ducat, *op. cit.*, 142–3 for other dedications.
- 40 It is dangerous to use this passage to support the notion of almost constant hostilities between Spartans and Messenians in the period 520–460, as Ducat, *Hilotes*, 142–3. This debate between Aristagoras and Cleomenes must largely have been invented by Herodotus, though the two are likely to have discussed Aristagoras' famous map.

- 41 Thus Ducat, 'Aspects', 27. His conclusion (*Hilotes*, 101) that the incident profoundly affected Spartans, because they used it to explain the earthquake of 465, is unfounded: in their search for a recent cause for Poseidon's wrath they might have latched onto an otherwise unmemorable action.
- 42 Cartledge, *Sparta*, 214, conjectures that there had been an abortive revolt.
- 43 Cartledge, 'Rebels', 44, suggests the accusation about offering citizenship was false.
- 44 Ducat, 'Aspects', 27; though one might speculate that the helots were sceptical about Pausanias' chances of success or the reliability of his promises.
- 45 Contra Hooker, 'Propaganda', 125, who assumes that the helots must have been the main cause of fear.
- 46 Cf. Roobaert, 'Danger', 147, Talbert, 'Role', 28; Diodorus asserts there was calm because the helots feared Spartan superiority and power (XI 63 4), but it would be unsafe to assume that his evidence had independent validity.
- 47 Roobaert, 'Danger', 143–4, asserts that a Messenian war was not necessarily a war against helots, and attempts to distinguish between a war that revealed the latent hostility of the subjected population in Messenia and a 'proper' helot revolt in Laconia that would be an expression of social malaise. From the Spartan angle helots in Messenia were just as much slaves as those in Laconia, and Spartans may not have identified a separate category of nationalist opposition.
- 48 Aristophanes *Lysistrata* 1137–42.
- 49 For detailed discussion, see Huart 'L'épisode'.
- 50 Many current translations introduce concepts of 'policy' or 'institutions', which entail a double translation of the 'stative' force of *καθειστήκει* (*LSJ*, *καθίστημι* B.6), or distort the word order in ways which convey a broader interpretation of Thucydides' statement. On word order, see Gomme (*A Historical Commentary on Thucydides* (Oxford 1956) III 547–8). Cartledge, though appearing to concede that Gomme is

probably correct (*Sparta*, 246), regularly translates 'Most Spartan institutions have always been designed with a view to security against the Helots'; cf. the version of de Ste. Croix, (n. 2 above) 92, 'Spartan policy is always mainly governed by the necessity of taking precautions against the helots', though he too notes that Gomme was probably correct about the word order. I prefer to keep the reference of τὰ πολλά vague, 'matters' rather than 'institutions', since it is possible that Thucydides had in mind special Spartan devices such as the locks and shield strap mentioned by Critias (for discussion of these, see below).

- 51 Cf. Cartledge, *Sparta*, 247, for the historiographical importance of this chapter as the vehicle for Thucydides' generalizations about Sparta.
- 52 Talbert, 'Role', 24–5.
- 53 Roobaerts, 'Danger', 151; Ducat, 'Mépris', 1460.
- 54 Powell, 'Mendacity', 173–4.
- 55 This timing is implied by the reference in the preceding sentence (IV 80 2) to the fear of helot revolt prompted by the occupation of Pylos. Cartledge, 'Revision', 381, treats this chronology as no more than a possibility, and stresses that Thucydides did not specify the timing.
- 56 Powell, *Athens*, 251.
- 57 Roobaert, 'Danger', 151, urged that the formation must have been organized well in advance of the expedition to permit training, though if they already had some military experience as batmen (Welwei, *Unfreie*, 140), or even as light-armed troops, the process would have been quicker.
- 58 Powell, *Athens*, 97, 219, and cf. 228–9; also 'Mendacity', 175 for reflection of Spartan propaganda.
- 59 The appearance of the 'deathly-pale' Pericleidas was remembered at Athens (Aristoph. *Lysist.* 1137–42).
- 60 The accuracy of Thucydidean opinions is discussed in the concluding section to this paper. The mere fact that Thucydides alludes to difficulties that he experienced as a result of Spartan secrecy (V 68 2) does not mean that what

- information he managed to record must be accepted without question.
- 61 An alternative origin for the story would have been from Messenian and other refugees at Pylos or Cythera. This would raise different problems of veracity, since it was very much in their interest to arouse sympathy in their new protectors (and to counter charges of unreliability): this might be achieved by propagating a story that expressed the futility for helots of service to Sparta, where loyalty was rewarded with disappearance, and presented the Spartans as brutal, deceitful, and impious.
- 62 J.F. Lazenby, *The Spartan Army* (Warminster 1985) 47, suggests that *neodamōdeis* may have been recruited as early as 424 (before the Olympic truce of that year). See also Ducat, *Hilotes*, 160–1; Welwei, *Unfreie*, 144–54; Cartledge, *Agisilaos*, 39–40, 175.
- 63 Cartledge, 'Revision', 381, characterizes the massacre as a 'particular variant on the well known "carrot and stick" ...methods of social control', but in Thucydides' story the subjects who have earned the carrot are given the stick, which would scarcely be an incentive for others to respond to future carrots. Sparta certainly used "carrot and stick" methods to dominate the helots, and these would not have been affected if the story of the massacre were a fiction for foreign consumption.
- 64 Cartledge, 'Revision', 380, treats the phraseology of V 23 3 as significant, but the collective abstract δουλεία, if it is not just an attempt to enhance the language of the treaty, was perhaps intended to cover a range of servile statuses, so as to avoid quibbling if Athenians proved reluctant to fulfil their obligations (e.g., if the term used had been 'helots', the Athenians might have responded to an appeal for help by arguing that the specific incident was a Messenian or non-helot revolt). This use of the collective δουλεία does not prove that it was a normal Spartan way of referring to helots, or that Spartans officially regarded the helots as an

- identifiable class. The length of the treaty, fifty years, will have been determined by factors other than Spartan concern about helots, and the inclusion of this clause in no way proves that Spartans thought they had a fifty-year helot problem.
- 65 Roobaert, 'Danger', 152–3, 155, argued that it was primarily the establishment at Pylos of the Messenian exiles from Naupactus that inspired panic at Sparta. Spartan concern to have these Messenians removed shows that this was a factor, but the wording of the Peace of Nicias does not allow Spartan concern to be minimized in this way.
- 66 Although some helots did desert, the Athenians were prepared to abandon the post immediately after the Sicilian disaster (Thucydides VIII 4); rebel helots were transferred to Pylos, which the Athenians retained, and they remained there until the surrender of this fort in 409 (Xenophon *Hell.* I 2 18; Diodorus XIII 64 5–7).
- 67 Roobaert, 'Danger', 149, though arguing that the threat to Sparta in the 420s was a localized event dependent upon specific causes, claimed that the Spartans developed a persistent unease vis-à-vis the helots in spite of the latter's general quietude.
- 68 This is suggested for the 420s by Talbert, 'Role', 39, and can also be applied to the 450s: then the Messenians had done their worst, but the Spartans were ultimately victorious and found the time to defeat the Athenians at Tanagra to boot; thereafter most helots were safely under control, while an awkward minority had been exported from the Peloponnese.
- 69 Thucydides is consistent in his attitude to the problems caused by large numbers of slaves in wartime: cf. VIII 40 2 for the Chiots, the largest slave-owners after the Spartans; the mass desertions from Attica after the fortification of Decelea (VII 27 5) may also be relevant.
- 70 Thucydides, politically active in the 420s, may have shared the expectation of Athenians, or at least of Demosthenes, an individual for whom Thucydides had some regard, that the Spartans ought to have feared a helot revolt. For succinct

- discussion of motivation in Thucydides, see Simon Hornblower, *Thucydides* (London 1987) 78–9.
- 71 Noted by D.M. Lewis, *Sparta and Persia* (Leiden 1977) 27. For discussion of the phrase πολέμοις οἰκέλοις ‘wars at home’ in Thucydides’ explanation of Spartan slowness (I 118 2), see de Ste. Croix, *OPW* 94–5: the reference covers the Great Revolt of 465, as well as the obscure wars against Argos and the Arcadian states, but it can scarcely be stretched to imply that Spartan ownership of helots was in itself a deterrent to military action.
- 72 Cartledge, ‘Revision’, 380, urges ‘the relevance of the Helots to his (Thucydides’s) conception of his subject, the Great Atheno-Peloponnesian War.’ But this is not demonstrated by the fact that scholars devote great attention to analysing Thucydides’ evidence on the helots: if he had said more about the helots, less discussion might have been needed.
- 73 Ps.-Xenophon *Athenaion Politeia* I 11.
- 74 Paraphrased in Plutarch *Lycurgus*, 28.
- 75 See the discussion in Ducat, *Hilotes*, 79–80, 145–7.
- 76 Ducat, *Hilotes*, 146–7.
- 77 In view of the purpose of Libanius’ citation of Critias, it is probably fair to conclude that there was nothing else in his *Spartan Constitution* that suggested Spartan fear of helots. Libanius could well have based his interpretation of Critias on the general Thucydidean judgments discussed above.
- 78 Quotation from Finley, ‘Civilization’ (n. 4) 148 = 56; in this article Finley argues for the interconnection between the freedom of elites in Greek city-states and their ability to exploit the labour of slaves (161 = 69).
- 79 Like Pausanias the Spartan regent, however, Critias could contemplate exploiting slaves to achieve his personal political ambitions, if there is truth in the allegation of Theramenes (Xen. *Hell.* II 3 36) that he armed the *penestai* of Thessaly.
- 80 Plutarch *Agessilaus*, 32; though Plutarch does refer to desertions of enrolled helots and *perioikoi* (cf. also Xen. *Hell.*

- VI 5 32 for *perioikoi* with the Thebans), the presence of 1,000 helots at the Isthmus in 369 is a sign of loyalty (Diodorus XV 65 6).
- 81 E.g., Cartledge, *Agesilaos* 165: 'it illuminates as if by a whole battery of arc-lamps the form and character of the Spartan class struggle.'
- 82 Cartledge, loc. cit., 'a good deal of agit-prop exaggeration'; cf. idem *Sparta*, 312–13.
- 83 Though efficiency of repression might conceal continuing animosities; Talbert, 'Role', 35, noting that Spartan authorities did nothing to diminish the discontent of men like Cinadon, infers that 'they had no underlying fear of a rebellion by the subject classes.'
- 84 *Agesilaos* loc. cit.; Finley, 'Sparta', 34, had already described the revolt as 'neatly symbolic'. For a literary analysis of the 'Cinadon story', see Vivienne Gray, *The Character of Xenophon's Hellenica* (London 1989) 39–45, who concludes that 'It is extremely difficult to assess the factual content of the story' (44).
- 85 It would be placing too much weight on this comment to conclude that Spartans did not normally consider themselves to be amidst enemies, i.e. that their views of the helots were not dominated by fear. I cannot, however, accept Ducat's conclusion (*Hilotes*, 151) that the expression denotes a persistent state of affairs.
- 86 The story might also show Xenophon displaying his familiarity with internal Spartan affairs, the type of information that Thucydides had found it difficult to discover.
- 87 For discussion of the location, see Cartledge, *Sparta*, 274–5. Cartledge assumes that the helots in question could not have been farming land at Aulon and so must have been fugitives from elsewhere, possibly the Soulima valley, though there is no evidence to confirm this.
- 88 This is to assume that the mission had some real justification: Cinadon was not meant to suspect anything, and so the incidental details had to seem entirely credible to him.

- 89 Although Xenophon uses the term 'Lacedaemonians', it is perhaps reasonable to conclude from the ephors' concern that Spartiates were involved.
- 90 Xenophon does not actually state that they were killed. The publicity of the punishment is in stark contrast to the treatment of the 2,000 helot volunteers in Thucydides IV 80.
- 91 Ducat, *Hilotes*, 83–5, discusses the translation at length; his conclusion that it is Plato's analysis of slavery in the *Laws* which will introduce the contentious dispute seems implausible and contrary to the general thrust of the passage, which says little to initiate an argument about helots in particular rather than slaves in general. Thucydides and Critias had held opinions about helots, as would people of Plato's generation, especially after the liberation of Messenia, when for example Alcidas of Elis could assert that 'God left everyone free; nature has made no-one a slave' (fr. 3, ed. G. Avezzu); cf. the suggestion of P. Vidal-Naquet, 'Reflections on Greek historical writing about slavery' in *The Black Hunter*, G. Avezzu (ed.) (Baltimore 1986) 168–88 at 183.
- 92 E.g., Xenophon *Oeconomicus* 13. 9–12, Ps.-Aristotle *Oeconomicus* 1.5, both cited and translated in Thomas Wiedemann, *Greek and Roman Slavery* (Beckenham 1981) 185–6.
- 93 My emphasis is the opposite of Cartledge, e.g., 'Rebels', 42, who presents revolts as perfectly exemplifying the observation of Aristotle. It is worth noting that Aristotle does not specifically refer to the helots as 'enemies' of the Spartans.
- 94 Ducat, 'Aspects', 34, interpreted these as a contemporary allusion to Laconian helots, but past and present are too intermingled in this passage for such a distinction to be made; at *Hilotes*, 88–9, he notes the mixture of specific and general in the passage.
- 95 Noted by Cartledge, *Agesilaos*, 404.
- 96 Michel Austin has reminded me that Polybius, discussing the weaknesses of Sparta and other states as imperial powers (VI 48–50), does not seem to regard the helots as relevant; the first two Messenian wars are cited as signs of

- Spartan greed, but her lack of resources is proposed as the main cause of her imperial failure.
- 97 For discussion, see Ducat, *Hilotes*, 108–9, who notes that the only parts of this passage that can securely be attributed to Aristotle are the assertions of Lycurgan origin for the *krypteia*, and the annual declaration of war. It is likely, however, that after mentioning the *krypteia*, Aristotle would have said something about it.
 - 98 Oliva, *Sparta*, 165, noted that Plutarch interpreted this as a grand *krypteia*. It is, of course, possible that the Aristotelian account was also influenced by Thucydides' story.
 - 99 H. Jeanmaire, 'La cryptie lacédémonienne', *REG* 26 (1913) 121–50; his approach is developed in P. Vidal-Naquet, 'The Black Hunter and the origin of the Athenian *Ephebia*', in *The Black Hunter* (n. 91) 106–28.
 - 100 Cf. also H. Jeanmaire, *Couroi et Courètes* (Lille 1939) 553.
 - 101 For a sober example, Finley, 'Sparta', 28: 'This ancient rite of initiation at the age of eighteen became rationalised, that is, re-institutionalised, by being tied to a new police function assigned to an elite youth corps. Significantly, policing the helots was one of their duties.' More speculative interpretations in E. David, 'Laughter in Spartan society', in *Sparta*, Powell (ed.), 1–25 at 13 (source of sardonic smiles among Spartiates), and Ducat, 'Mépris', 1456–7 (inversion of symbolism of helot-dog *v.* Spartiate-wolf).
 - 102 Michell, *Sparta*, 162, goes too far in suggesting that δὲ χρόνου (Plutarch *Lyc.* 28) could imply that it was organized only on extraordinary occasions; intermittent repetition at uncertain intervals is more likely (cf. Oliva, *Sparta*, 47 n. 3).
 - 103 I emphasize the limitations of our knowledge about the *krypteia*. The evidence is so restricted that any assertions, negative or positive, about its nature must be heavily qualified.
 - 104 Deprived of its anthropological origins, the *krypteia* can be taken as an illustration of Thucydides' opinion about Spartan arrangements (IV 80 3: see the discussion above),

though it cannot be demonstrated that Thucydides was aware of the practice.

- 105 The point is made by Xenophon, *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians* 2 7.
- 106 E.g., Finley, 'Sparta', 28 (quoted in n. 101 above).
- 107 Powell, 'Mendacity', 181.
- 108 An additional explanation is suggested by Powell's observation (*Athens* 215–16) that a declaration of war made deceit 'religiously permissible and just', citing Xenophon *Agésilas* 1 17.
- 109 G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, 'Slavery and other forms of unfree labour' in *Slavery*, Archer (ed.), 19–32 at 24.
- 110 Paul A. Cartledge, 'Serfdom in classical Greece' in *Slavery*, Archer (ed.), 33–41 at 39; also 'Rebels', 41.
- 111 The point is made by Ducat, *Hilotes*, 96–7.
- 112 This is normally translated 'dogskin', but Ducat, *Hilotes*, 113–15, has shown that the word is not so specific.
- 113 Ducat, *Hilotes*, 119–21; but although we are ignorant about the frequency and extent of these actions, his attempt to marginalize Myron's evidence by suggesting that the beatings and killings were symbolic acts carried out on representatives of the helots is unconvincing.
- 114 *Hilotes*, 109.
- 115 This is reinforced by Theopompus, fr. 13, 'The people of the helots is in all respects in a harsh and bitter plight'; for discussion of the translation, see Ducat, *Hilotes*, 90.
- 116 Talbert, 'Role', 27.
- 117 Even sceptics about the helot threat to Sparta tend to accept Thucydides' statement as a valid generalization: thus Cawkwell, 'Decline', 390; Talbert, 'Role', 39.
- 118 Thus, as Stephen Hodkinson has kindly pointed out, the remoteness of Malea is a significant factor in the revolt of Laconian helots in the years 415–413.
- 119 Thus Powell, *Athens*, 231, has suggested persistent irregular brigandage in Messenia.
- 120 A.H.M. Jones, *Sparta* (Oxford 1967) indeed pushed the

negative assessment of Sparta and the helots to its logical conclusion by asserting that since 'Messenian Helots had always been more of a liability than an asset' (134), 'The reduction of Helot numbers by the refoundation of Messene might be regarded as a gain, since it reduced the gross disproportion between rulers and subjects' (137). In the later fourth century Sparta desperately wanted to recover Messenia, which suggests that possession of it was seen as beneficial.

- 121 As inferred by Talbert, 'Role', 30.
- 122 Cawkwell 'Decline', 392-3, followed by Talbert, 'Role', 39, stresses the impact on at least Laconian helots of the rewards offered.
- 123 K.J. Dover, *Thucydides (Greece and Rome, New Surveys in the Classics vol. 7 (Oxford 1973))* 4.
- 124 On this see Talbert, 'Role' 29; it is testimony to the efficacy of Spartan mechanisms for control.
- 125 As suggested by Stephen Hodkinson, 'Inheritance, marriage and demography: perspectives upon the success and decline of classical Sparta' in *Sparta* Powell (ed.), 79-121 at 101, following Thomas J. Figueira, 'Population patterns in late archaic and classical Sparta', *TAPA* 116 (1986) 165-214 at 172-5.
- 126 *Agis and Cleomenes* 9, discussing the existence of a Spartan temple to Fear.
- 127 This essential point is made by Finley, 'Sparta', 38; cf. Ducat, *Hilotes*, 152-3.
- 128 Talbert, 'Role', 30, notes the naivety of both Spartans and helots; cf. *ibid.* 35 for Spartan superiority.
- 129 Thucydides V 14 3; Spartans were not immune to the dangers of overconfidence.
- 130 W.G. Forrest, reviewing J.F. Lazenby, *The Spartan Army*, *JHS* 107 (1987) 231.

V

XENOPHON, SPARTA AND
THE *CYROPAEDIA*

Christopher Tuplin

Apart from Athenian birth and Socratic 'education', connections with Sparta and Persia represent the most distinctive element in Xenophon's life history. Their significance is reflected in his *oeuvre* by (i) the appearance of casual allusions to Spartan or Persian phenomena in contexts not otherwise concerned with either; and (ii) the existence of whole books closely connected with Persia or Sparta, primarily *Cyropaedia* and *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum*, and secondarily *Agesilaus* and *Anabasis* (which embrace some material about both and provide encomia of the individuals who encapsulated Xenophon's experience of the two states.)¹ The principal aim of this paper is to consider Sparta's role, if any, in *Cyropaedia*; but (not least because this is part of the larger question of the Xenophontic view of Sparta) some commentary upon attitudes to and interrelation between Sparta and Persia in the rest of the *corpus* is called for. It is convenient to begin our investigation with an examination of the casual allusions.

Casual allusions

Sparta

Normally Sparta is adduced as a model, but the contexts are not always entirely free of ambivalence.²

In *Memorabilia* 3 5 13 the Spartans (the leading power, οἱ πρωτεύοντες) represent a paradigm for Athenian self-improvement, though a second best compared with identifying and imitating the virtues of their own ancestors. The relevant Spartan virtues are respect for old age, physical training, obedience to rulers, and *homonoia* (concord), of which the last commands most attention, in the sense that it is the threat posed by the corresponding Athenian failings (*phthonos* (envy), political dissension, litigiousness, competitiveness for profit, fighting about public affairs while maintaining a sort of detachment from them) which receives the longest discussion. But it is implied that, quite apart from the preferability of imitating their own ancestors, Athenians could theoretically excel Spartans at observing Spartan *epitēdeumata* (habits). It is likely that the whole paraphernalia of the *agōgē* (Spartan upbringing) is regarded as unnecessary, since Pericles certainly does not say that he is assuming its adoption; and Socrates subsequently argues that Athenians are not intrinsically incapable of disciplined obedience.

Two further passages interrelate with *Memorabilia* 3 5 13. In 4 4 15 obedience to the laws is a principal Spartan characteristic, and one which makes cities best in peace and irresistible in war. There is a connection between obedience and *homonoia* (the quality highlighted in 3 5 13) – for everywhere in Greece *gerousiai* (councils of elders: the term is a tell-tale hint at Sparta) and ‘the best men’ exhort citizens to *homonoia*. In *Symposium* 8 39 the Spartans are natural leaders like Themistocles, Pericles or Solon (cf. πρωτεύοντες in 3 5 13). The context is discussion of the virtues which Callias needs in order to become politically influential. In Athens it is an issue of knowledge, even *philosophia*; with Sparta it is *askēsis* (training). We are hardly meant to think either adequate by itself.

Spartan military qualities are raised by two other texts. *Memorabilia* 3 9 2 assumes that Sparta is as inescapably associated with hoplite fighting as Thracians with light shields and javelins or Scythians with bows. The passage implies that all these peoples can, in principle, display an equally high natural disposition

to courage, just as in *Memorabilia* 3 5 13 there was no intrinsic reason why Athenians should not be as disciplined as Spartans. *Symposium* 8 33 f. mentions Elis, Boeotia and Sparta in a discussion of pederasty and warfare. Sparta is the place where *aidōs* (shame) not *anaideia* (shamelessness) is worshipped and where bravery is not dependent on proximity to a lover. Here for once she is an unambiguously good model.

This is not perhaps true in a final passage. Xenophon observes (*Mem.* 1 2 61) that Socrates' services to his interlocutors surpassed those of Lichas to foreigners visiting the Gymnopaediae and represented more of an adornment for Athens in the eyes of outsiders because he did not just give occasional dinners but made people better all the time. How much of a put-down this is depends upon how much pride Spartans were known to have taken in Lichas – a question we cannot answer. But it may not be unduly cynical to observe that Lichas (a wealthy devotee of Olympic chariot-racing) was a classic example of the divergence of reality and ideal in the Lyncurgan state.

Persia

Some texts are neutral,³ but three from *Memorabilia* express a negative attitude: 4 2 34 observes that the king carried off wise men to his court, thus proving that wisdom can be bad since it leads to slavery, and 3 5 25 presents Mysian and Pisidian defence of freedom against Persian might as a paradigm for Athenian resistance to the Boeotians. Earlier, in a debate about the relative happiness of ruler and ruled, the Persians are adduced *qua* rulers of Asia (2 1 10). Certain other barbarians are named as well, but the equivalent Greek question (are the ruled or the rulers happier among the Greeks?) is left anonymous. Since elsewhere it is Spartans who are 'leaders' (*Mem.* 3 5 13; *Symp.* 8 39; *Ag.* 1 3), the passage arguably draws an implicit parallel between Sparta and Persia. But, if so, it is unfriendly to both. Aristippus describes the ruled as enslaved, and Socrates assents (12), while making the point that, though it may be arduous to be a ruler, it is better than being a victim.

On the positive side we may note some purely technical matters in *De Re Equestri*⁴ but otherwise attention confines itself to *Oeconomicus*. Xenophon seeks to defend the status of agriculture, and one argument developed at length (4 4 f.) is that the Persian king himself fosters agriculture as well as military excellence. The passage ends with a vignette unambiguously bringing Persia and Sparta together: Lysander praises the beauty and skilful order of Cyrus' Sardian *paradeisos*, is astonished to discover that Cyrus designed and in part planted it himself and concludes that the prince deserves his happiness because he is a 'good man'. This last observation follows Cyrus' statement that he never dines without first working hard at something agricultural or military or otherwise appropriate to *philotimia* (ambition), but it would be hypercritical to claim that Lysander is not saying that planting trees is the act of the good man and is merely praising the principle of hard physical exertion. Though a Spartan, he is surely being made to endorse a Persian system of values. There are two or three further relevant passages later in the treatise. The allusion in 8 11 to a Phoenician merchant ship as an *exemplum* of orderly storage might not have been regarded by Xenophon as touching upon the Persian empire (though it is ethnically provocative). But there is no doubt of the status and positive intent of 12 20 (the king's personal supervision of fattening of a horse parallels the estate owner's training of a bailiff) and 14 6 (the royal principle of rewarding virtue as well as punishing crime is applied to training a bailiff).

Pomeroy (1984) has argued that the allusion to the Persian king in *Oeconomicus* 4 is relevant to the picture of Ischomachus' wife (with a three-way parallel involving agriculture (of *paradeisoi*), household management, royal rule). In principle the obvious parallel is between Ischomachus and the king, especially given the references in 12 20 and 14 6. The association with his wife depends on her assimilation to the queen bee, reinforced by the application of the same simile to Cyrus in *Cyropaedia* 5 1 24. One specific claim – that the civil/military divide in the satrapal organisation at 4 9 f. (cf. Tuplin 1987a: 171 f., 232 f.) is

engineered as a parallel for the husband/wife divide in the *oikos* (household) – will hardly work: this divide is at a level beneath the king and it is with the king that Ischomachus and his wife are being compared. Moreover Xenophon can in a single passage (9 15) compare the wife's role with (i) custodian of law (*nomophylax*), (ii) garrison commander, (iii) Council (*qua* supervisor of cavalrymen) and (iv) queen – a range which spans the military/civil divide. None the less I have some sympathy with Pomeroy's argument in general. That the picture of the wife is to be read alongside the earlier defence of agriculture is after all also clear from an effective cross-reference between the argument dissociating agriculture from sedentary banausic skills (the sort banned in cities with a reputation for military excellence) and the sedentary tendencies ascribed in 10 13 to the wrong type of wife – the one who likes make-up.

Implicit assimilation of wife and Persian king is extremely piquant, especially given that the wife is sometimes seen as actually superior to her husband⁵ and can be said to have a masculine mentality (*ἀνδρική διάνοια*: 10 1). What it calls to mind is material discussed by Hall (1989) 201 f., where the perversity of female dominance is associated with the deviation from civilized propriety represented by barbarian *mores*. Xenophon is not demonizing Ischomachus' wife, but the comparison and contrast with tragedy helps to underline how remarkable his attitude is. In our present context what deserves stress is that Persia is adduced as a positive parallel: this is neither inadvertent nor banal nor a front for something else. We must remember this when contemplating *Cyropaedia*. An inclination to question the assignment of superior value to Greek over barbarian was to be encountered in some intellectual circles of the later fifth and the fourth centuries, but it is important to note in particular that Xenophon was at ease with what will have seemed to many Greeks the ethnic paradox of crying up the virtues of Achaemenid barbarians as a model for Greek *kaloi kagathoi*.

One further point: Ischomachus' wife enjoys the benefits of a metaphorical *gymnasion* in 10 11 when she mixes flour and

kneads dough – a striking image to emphasize the dissociation of her activities from those of menials. It is conceivable that the image owes something to the notorious inclusion of Spartan women in gymnastic training. But the appearance of the *gymnasion* is so much a function of the wife's being implicitly compared to a man in the first place that it seems more likely that we do not need a special Spartan explanation.

To summarize. Casual references to Sparta generally treat her as a model, but do so with some ambivalence⁶ and certainly without a conviction that what is Spartan must necessarily surpass the potential of all other peoples. Casual references to Persia are normally neutral or negative. Perhaps not surprisingly the two states do not appear together very much. *Memorabilia* 2 1 10 is arguably an implicit case, though damaging to both parties. *Oeconomicus* 4 6 ff, with its Lysander/Cyrus vignette, is the only explicit instance, just as it is the only significant instance of Persia as a positive role-model. Should anything particularly substantial be inferred from this? One could say that Xenophon is exploiting the authority of Spartan probity to endorse an untraditional view and that the procedure provides a parallel for supposed conjunction of Spartan traits and Persian figures in *Cyropaedia*. But such a view would be forced. For one thing it is a nice question whether the reader could seriously be expected to take Lysander as a figurehead of traditional Spartan probity. For another it could just as reasonably be maintained that the effect of the passage is to compare Sparta's values unfavourably with those of Cyrus. Be that as it may, the conclusion of this section must be that Xenophon's attitude to Sparta is not unreconstructedly approbative (the same is true in *Hellenica*: see Tuplin 1993) and that he is prepared to use the Achaemenid king in his own right as a positive model of royal power.

Agesilaus and Anabasis

In *Agesilaus* Persia is unrelievedly bad, the enemy in the military

narrative in 1 and, in the person of the Great King, the evil foil to Agesilaus' qualities.⁷ Agesilaus is an ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός (a good man), the Persian king an ἀλαζών (a pretentious one), and the latter's profile is recognizably the same as that implied in *Cyropaedia* 8 8. The contrast with *Oeconomicus* where a Spartan recognizes Cyrus the Younger as ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός is notable. Since, of course, the focus of our interest is *Cyropaedia*, a work which idealizes a Persian and in which hostility to Persia is confined to (precisely) 8 8, *Oeconomicus* 4 is more likely than Agesilaus to be the appropriate model to bear in mind.

In *Anabasis* the situation on the Persian side is clear, though varied. Cyrus is largely idealized, Tissaphernes is unattractive (to say the least), though more 'heroically' so than, for example, Ariaeus. Artaxerxes is surprisingly neutral and the likes of Orontes are without specific character.⁸ On the Spartan side there is less neutrality. Some material is favourable and/or consistent with stereotypes of Spartan qualities and behaviour.⁹ But some is not. When Xenophon rejects sole command in favour of a Spartan he does so because it will be politically advantageous, not because of a recognition of inherent Spartan superiority (6 1 26). There are notoriously several unpleasant Spartans in the last three books.¹⁰ The earlier banter between Xenophon and Cheirisophus about Athenian and Spartan thievery (4 6 14 f.) is of doubtful good humour, given that the incident comes shortly after a serious quarrel occasioned by Cheirisophus' beating of a guide (4 6 3). The tendency to command with a rod is displayed by other Spartans, notably Clearchus; and it is perhaps Clearchus who is of greatest interest here, for we are bound to compare him with Cyrus, not least because both are subjects of obituary notices (1 9 1 ff.; 2 6 1 ff.) and because of the formal parallel between 1 5 8 and 2 3 11, passages specifically adverting to their paradigmatic behaviour/qualities as generals. The comparison is not favourable to Clearchus: the Greek obituaries in 2 6 reveal Clearchus as one extreme of deviation from the ideal – excessive dependence on brutality (if also efficiency) – just as Proxenus deviated too far towards

wanting to be friends with everyone. There can be little doubt that, by comparison, Cyrus represents the ideal in *Anabasis* I (as Xenophon does in *Anabasis* III – VII). One might go further. Cyrus is notable for a certain allure of Hellenism: he watches Greek athletics (1 2 10), perhaps shares Greek amusement at barbarian discomfiture (1 2 18), respects Greek seers and omen-interpretation (1 7 18; 1 8 16), is favoured by Greek cities in Ionia (1 1 3; 1 2 2) and speaks wistfully about Greek freedom (1 7 3). In so far as he is contrasted with a Spartan type (Clearchus) it could be maintained that we have here an assimilation of the Persian perhaps to a specifically non-Spartan Greek model and certainly to a non-specific Hellenic model. But even if we do not go that far, there is undoubtedly a presentation of Persian and Spartan as distinct and autonomous figures, an absence of knee-jerk claims of Spartan superiority and a willingness to accept the Persian as exemplary in his own right and not as a front for anything Spartan. The conclusion resembles that in the previous section and obviously has considerable bearing upon *Cyropaedia*.

Cyropaedia* and *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum

A first obvious observation is that, whereas Persia is not named in *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum*, there are two references to Sparta in *Cyropaedia*. One (6 2 10) is neutral, a mention of Sparta as prospective but unconfirmed Lydian–Assyrian ally. Not so the second (4 2 1) where Hyrcanian–Assyrian relations are compared with Spartan–Sciritan ones in terms which are explicitly unfriendly and implicitly assimilate Sparta and Assyria. The comparison presupposes the erroneous view that Hyrcania and Assyria are contiguous (4 2 1; 5 3 11, 24)¹¹ but is not simply the casual result of this error. The Hyrcanians desert Assyria unilaterally and earn special status in Persian eyes, and the origin of the whole theme is presumably a belief that Hyrcanians actually had a favoured position in the Achaemenid Empire,

which Xenophon has chosen quite deliberately to elaborate in a manner unkind to Sparta. This gratuitous criticism is surely (i) inconsistent with any hypothesis that Xenophon's aim was to speak favourably of Sparta under a Persian guise (especially since Cyrus' acceptance of the Hyrcanians as allies positively dissociates him from Sparta) and (ii) barely consistent with the (weaker) belief that Sparta was in Xenophon's mind as an exemplary model during composition of the novel.

None the less assimilation or association of Sparta and Persia has often been detected in *Cyropaedia*. One particular (and extreme) form is that of Prinz (1911) who believed that the novel's subtext was a possible Spartan-led panhellenic attack upon Persia. The issue of city-state hegemonies is no doubt a possible subtext for a Greek reader, while the palinodic chapter makes it natural to reflect upon Persian vulnerability (cf. Carlier 1978: 139). But Prinz's thesis implied specific assimilation of Persian and Spartan, Medes and Greeks, and Assyrians and Persians. Scharr (1919) (whose criticisms are apt to be endorsed without further comment) produced some arguably irrelevant counter-blasts (we might agree that Sparta was an unrealistic champion and the idea of a panhellenic crusade a fantasy without assuming that Xenophon concurred) but he also denounced the assimilations just mentioned. He found it easy simply to declare that there was no reason to assimilate Assyrians and fourth-century Persians and scarcely more time-consuming to insist that assimilation of the Medes to a congeries of Greek allies was unnatural and made an unattractive model for a supposed relationship between Sparta and other Greeks. Moreover, he asked, if the Medes correspond to Greek allies, what does Cyaxares' daughter represent and with whom are we to identify actual Greeks who appear in the *Cyropaedia* narrative? These last questions prove that Scharr's approach was perhaps unduly literal-minded; a parable can stand in differing degrees of one-to-one match with reality and we could assume that Xenophon was only seeking a general match.

It is worth noting here the treatment of Media. One striking

manipulation of history in *Cyropaedia* is that the Persian takeover of Media is peaceful: Cyrus wins the hearts and minds of the Medes and thereby forces their king, in a quasi-democratic fashion, to cede power to him as (a) *de facto* leader in the Assyrian War and (b) inheritor of the kingdom through marriage with his daughter. It is the unnamed Assyrian who plays the role of hated tyrant which in Herodotus or Ctesias belonged to the Mede Astyages. Prinz saw this as due to Xenophon's need for the Spartan hegemony to be accepted on the grounds of moral and technical superiority. This is not in principle absurd and (granted that an oriental story could symbolize Greek power relationships – a concession Scharr was fundamentally unwilling to make) the resultant picture is not ridiculously inappropriate to the propaganda purpose which Prinz envisaged.¹² Scharr had a different explanation: Xenophon may have believed that his story was not merely what *should* have happened (a version making better sense of the amalgamation of Persian and Mede sometimes thought to be reflected in interchangeable Greek use of the two ethnonyms)¹³ but was what actually did happen or what independent traditions said *had* happened.¹⁴ It is not impossible, and even the fact that *Anabasis* 3.4.11 presumes Persian destruction of the Median *arkhē* by force may not preclude endorsement of a different version for the purposes of *Cyropaedia*. But it does not seem specially probable.

The real problem for Prinz is the initial assimilation of Sparta and Persia. For the more it be maintained that Xenophon specifically equated the heroes of *Cyropaedia* with a particular Greek power, the harder it may be to claim that the rest of the story bears only a very generalized relationship to reality. Scharr does not have this difficulty because he is anyway unimpressed by the case for a Sparta–Persia assimilation; and more recent proponents of panhellenic subtexts (Luccioni 1947; Carlier 1978) need not have it because their theses are not dependent upon naming a particular Greek hegemon. Are these approaches correct? More generally what is the nature of the Spartan input, if any, into Xenophon's utopia?

It is not too difficult to think of considerations external to Xenophonic texts which might in principle favour such assimilation.¹⁵

1) Sparta and Persia could strike any Athenian as a natural pair, since they were the states whose enmity played a crucial role in creating, defining and (conjointly) destroying the Empire. (It is an odd reflection of this that later fifth century Athenian dress affectations included both Persian cloaks and Spartan shoes – not indeed as parts of a single outfit, but as representatives of distinct ways of expressive dressing.)¹⁶ In the circumstances an inclination to link them would not be surprising; and pertinent examples are to hand in the Platonic *corpus*, certainly in *Alcibiades* I 120a–124b, where the education, power and wealth of the two states (or their kings) are adduced in criticism of the unreflective Athenian aristocrat, and perhaps in *Laws* (see Powell (this volume): 295–8).

2) Sparta was apt to occur to Greeks who dealt with exotic places. Megasthenes 715F16 (= Arrian *Indica* 10 8) refers to helots when discussing Mauryan slavery. Ephorus wrote that Lycurgus studied Egyptian customs, Isocrates that Sparta borrowed the professional soldier from Egypt (11 17 f.). The Egyptian comparison is already explicit in Herodotus,¹⁷ and his general principle that everything in Egypt is the opposite of ordinary Greek practice, recalls the stress on abnormality found in material on Sparta. Of Spartan–Persian comparison Herodotus has, it is true, nothing save opaque parallels between Spartan and Achaemenid royal burials and the shared custom of remitting debts upon the death of a monarch (6 59). But the nature of his general theme was inhibiting: Sparta was to serve as a contrast (via Demaratus and, with fine irony, Pausanias) not a parallel.

3) Sparta naturally came to mind when war was in question. Plato (*Laws* 637d) observes that warlike barbarians approve of drunkenness, whereas warlike Spartans do not, but that among the former Persians stand out as indulging in drink and other

pleasures in a more orderly (though still excessive) fashion than Scythians, Thracians, Celts, Iberians or Carthaginians. Perhaps he would have conceded that Persians were a better class of barbarian – and less unsuitable for assimilation to the Spartans. 4) *Cyropaedia* is not the only text to idealize Cyrus.¹⁸ Two others may be relevant. Plato (*Epist.* 320d) told Dionysius that he could surpass Lycurgus or Cyrus or anyone who seemed to shine in character (ἦθος) or political principle (πολιτεία). This does not exactly assimilate Cyrus and Lycurgus (Cyrus exemplifies excellence of ἦθος, Lycurgus of πολιτεία) but does treat both as *exempla*. Antisthenes may have assimilated Cyrus and Heracles to the extent of using both to exemplify industriousness (Dio Chrys. 5 109 and Diog. Laert. 6 2),¹⁹ and it is possible that Heracles was given a specifically Spartan label as progenitor of the Spartan royal families.

These considerations are, however, largely speculative and the Xenophontic texts examined so far display a greater tendency to contrast than to compare or assimilate Sparta and Persia, so we should approach *Cyropaedia* with few expectations. In our search we shall not expect to find positively evil Spartan stereotypes – for example, perfidiousness (Euripides *Supplikes* 184, *Andromache* 445) or corruption (Ollier 1933/43: 149 f.; Noetlich 1986) – and the primary line of comparison will have to be with things which Xenophon himself adduced as admirable in *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum*, *Agesilaus* or elsewhere or at least with characteristic features which one could imagine being treated as points of excellence.

There are various obvious differences between *Cyropaedia* and *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum* and the worlds they describe: (i) a desire to explain surprising examples of political stability and success occasions both works, but the results differ in scale and type (quasi-historiography; pamphlet-analysis); (ii) Cyrus' empire does not suffer the oliganthropy of Sparta (*RL* 1 1), i.e. the cause for surprise and investigation in the two cases is different; (iii) Sparta is repeatedly presented as uniquely eccentric in its

values and institutions; something similar applies to Persian education (see below, p. 152) but it is not a general feature of the rhetoric of *Cyropaedia*. One reason is that the work's bedrock is actually Greek normality, at least in the sense that the principles of leadership which it exemplifies are (Xenophon wishes us to suppose) in no way intrinsically inconsistent with ordinary Greek values. To put it another (perhaps oversimplified) way, *Cyropaedia* is far more prescriptively exemplary than *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum* and thus has less reason to dwell on eccentricity. This does not preclude piquant touches, such as the explanation of why eunuchs are a good idea (7 5 58–65), but orientalism of a sort distasteful to Greek sentiment is kept in check (cf. Tuplin 1990), and when it is not the reason may be not that Xenophon cannot resist paradox but that he wishes to show the vulnerability of even the most perfect ruler to corruption of sensibilities (cf. Carlier 1978).

Cyropaedia and *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum* do share one remarkable formal feature, viz. the palinodic chapters (8 8 1 ff., 14 1 ff.) and it is worth comparing them, because this brings out further important contrasts.

The Spartan palinode says that the Lycurgan laws cannot confidently be described as changeless (ἀκίνητοι) and that the Spartans obey neither them nor their god. Specific failings (pride in wealth, lack of hermetic sealing from, and longing for, outside world, desire to lead irrespective of merit) are all seen as consequences or symptoms of Lycurgan breakdown, not as examples of particular laws being broken. The Persian one stresses that perfection depended on the live personality of Cyrus and proves the subsequent deterioration by a series of demonstrations, eventually summed up in the proposition that contemporary Persians are less reverent to the gods, less dutiful to relatives, less just about other people, and less brave in war.²⁰ I make two points on this material.

First, references in the summary to lack of duty to relatives and justice towards other people take us no further than 8 8 7 (sections A and B in n. 20). The major thrust of 5–18 is different.

Section F (warfare) begins with soft saddle coverings, which is a sort of transition from softness to warfare (section E). Of the preceding items, B has an explicit military dimension and is followed by a comment on invaders (B') which recurs in 21 in the heart of the warfare section. Much of the other material is relevant to warfare, if not explicitly labelled as such, and the implicit contrast between γνώμαι (attitudes) and σώματα (bodies) hints that Xenophon primarily thinks of everything from 8 onwards as concerned with unmanliness in war. It is only the items about bribery and poison in D, the section on *paideia* (education), which entirely diverge from this topic, and they are the only items in 6 ff. which easily relate to the summary's point about injustice towards other people – and, even so, injustice to men is regarded in 7 as a source of military weakness. It is a striking illustration of the extent to which the Persian *paideia* is (unlike Spartan education) *not* militaristic that even though the overall setting of 8 8 8–18 is war-preparedness it is precisely when *paideia* is brought in that items less directly relevant to warfare obtrude.

Second, throughout 8–26 the argument is essentially that the institutions have been perverted, not abolished. Something similar is present earlier too: for in 4 it is not denied that people who serve the king's interest are still honoured, merely stated that those who do so treacherously are honoured most. The rhetoric of criticism is not the same as in *RL* 14: there is a greater (if ironic) sense of continuity in contradiction, more implicit stress on the importance of the personality of Cyrus restraining the weaknesses inherent in the system. Some such idea is not entirely inappropriate to Sparta, especially for those who find ambivalent elements in chapters other than 14, but the points highlighted in 14 (breakdown of the principle of distinction between Sparta and the outside world, the way that things are deliberately done a different way, the loss of the moral high ground) represent a fundamental reversal of the principal characteristics and claims of the old system. In short, Sparta arguably represents a worse case of degeneration, and we can certainly

say that Xenophon's Sparta and Persia are not sufficiently assimilated to be vulnerable to the same sort of decline: he has been able to realize his Persian fantasy and sardonically define its distance from fourth-century reality, while retaining an intellectual independence of Lacedaemon.

With this background we may now turn to the parallels which can or cannot be discovered between the institutions of *Cyropaedia* and Sparta.²¹

Kings

Both worlds have kings. *Cyropaedia* does not reproduce the Spartan dyarchy – unsurprisingly, for it was too distinctive and there tended only to be one powerful Spartan king at once anyway. But in most of *Cyropaedia* Cyrus is not a king and Astyages and Cyaxares are obviously not crypto-Spartans, so in seeking Spartan parallels we are confined to the position of Cambyses as king of Persia in Book I and of Cyrus as both king of Persia and lord of an empire in Book VIII; and the latter is certainly un-Spartan, if only because Cyrus practises that seclusion which is so strenuously contrasted with Agesilaus' behaviour and which contradicts the general Spartan principle of life ἐν τῷ φανέρῳ (i.e. in the public eye: *Cyr.* 7 5 37, 57; *RL* 5 2). One might add that, whatever one's view of the sources of Cyrus' death-scene (8 7 1 ff.),²² there is no trace of the 'heroization', literal or otherwise, of *Hellenica* 3 3 1 and *RL* 15 8–9 (Parker 1988; Cartledge 1988).

Among the principal Spartan royal characteristics are leadership in war; being just one element in a polity alongside ephors, council and assembly; and subordination to the laws – already a stereotype in Herodotus and represented in Xenophon by first, praise of Agesilaus' 'worship' of the laws (1 36; 2 16; 7 2) and second, the observations in *RL* 15 that the kings' marks of honour hardly exceeded those of private persons and that there was a monthly oath binding the king to rule according to the laws. The Persian *polis* partly follows suit. Judges enforce the idea that the lawful is the same as the just (νόμιμον = δίκαιον: cf.

Mem. 4 4 12 f.) and the king does what the city says, his criterion (μέτρον) being Law, not personal inclination (1 3 17–8). This is contrasted with Median tyranny: Persians believe in equality (τὸ ἴσον ἔχειν), whereas Medes practise *isēgoria* (equal right of speech) – viz. all shouting at once at dinner. However, two points require comment.

First, in Sparta king and ephors swear a covenant under which the king rules according to the laws and the city leaves the kingship intact (15 7). A comparison is often drawn with *Cyropaedia* 8 5 25 (cf. Prinz 1911: 8 f.; Rawson 1969: 50; Tatum 1989: 79), but what that says is that Cyrus agrees to defend Persia from invasion or subversion of the laws, while the Persians undertake to assist Cyrus if anyone threatens or revolts against his rule. This is more like a treaty between sovereign states than a covenant between fellow citizens: it is in fact tailored to the narrative, in which Cyrus is essentially an absentee ruler and, whatever was the case in Book I, it does not nearly so directly bind the king to rule under the law as does the Spartan covenant. Second, in the bulk of *Cyropaedia* law is not specially important – the military setting encourages this (though cf. 3 3 52 f. on suppression of cowardice by law) – and by the end ruler and law are identified (8 1 21: the ruler as βλέπων νόμος, ‘living law’) while the only institution in Book VIII which is called even a quasi-law is a regulation about judges designed to provoke discord among the courtiers.²³

In short, even if Sparta were the model for Persian kingship, *Cyropaedia* is about Cyrus departing from it, at least for most purposes. It is paradoxical, or typically Xenophontic, that such a characteristic Spartan thing as the covenant of king and state is reserved for the end, changed in character and used to highlight Cyrus’ absentee emperorship.

The Homotimate

A notable feature of Persian society in *Cyropaedia* (prior to Book VIII) are the *homotimoi* (men of equal standing), a class not diverted by economics from pursuit of education and court

attendance. One cannot help recalling the *homoioi* (Spartan equals), and the adlection of *dēmotai* (commoners) into the New Model Army alongside, though not as, *homotimoi* (Tuplin 1990: 18 f.) may evoke the *neodamōdeis* of later classical Sparta.²⁴ But two qualifications are required.

First, 5 1 30 states that Persian *homotimoi* and elevated *dēmotai* have no role but to practise the arts of war. This has a certain Spartan colour. But militarism as such is not an ideal of *Cyropaedia*. We have already noted this in connection with the palinode and it will come out in examination of the education system as well.²⁵ It is characteristic that, when the ascetic ex-*dēmotēs* Pheraulas gives his property to Sacas in exchange for Sacas' support as a *xenos* (guest-friend: 8 3 25 ff.), the purpose is not that Pheraulas can devote himself to military exercises but that he can practice devotion to his friends (ἐπιμέλεια ἀμφὶ τοὺς φίλους). (Of course Sacas' exemption from attendance at court and from military service no doubt *per contrarium* indicates Pheraulas' duties; but the point is that military duty, let alone military obsession, are not highlighted.)

Second, equality of standing (τιμή) is not the same as equality. Though all Persian *homotimoi* are wealthy enough to be released from earning their living, they are not of theoretically equal wealth: there is none of that ideal requirement of equal lifestyle (*diaita*) noted in *RL* 7. The *homotimoi* are a simple oligarchic elite without the peculiar features of the Spartiate citizenry.

Dinner institutions

Talk of *diaita* brings us to another Spartiate peculiarity, namely common dining. Its significance for Xenophon is in part simply restraint of culinary self-indulgence and it thus belongs to the theme of physical self-control and moderate lifestyle which exercises him in various works, in both Spartan and non-Spartan contexts. I shall say no more about this save for two observations. The characteristic Spartan ban on compulsory drinking is not incorporated in Persian practice²⁶ while the contrast between Persia and Media in clothing and *diaita* (1 3 2 etc.), which

could theoretically symbolize that between Spartan austerity and the habits of other Greeks, is probably more correctly seen as incorporating into the Utopia the contrast between Hellenic moderation and non-Hellenic self-indulgence – something encouraged or rationalized by, for instance, Herodotus' theme of Persian simplicity.²⁷ The other matter to consider is the conversational accompaniments of eating in Sparta and at the plentiful meal-times in *Cyropaedia*.²⁸ At Spartan *philitia* (dining-societies) improving talk was about 'what someone does well in the polis' (*RL* 5 5). Cyrus' dinner table is also a place for improvement, but the supposed Spartan procedure is not exactly like, for example, 2 2 1 f. or 8 4 1 f., where the talk is partly or mostly about things done wrong. Of course Spartan reality may have had a more negative character (see Powell (this volume): 293); and the Persian conversations avoid disreputable behaviour or conversation (*aischrourgia*, *aischrologia*: cf. *RL* loc. cit.); jests are far removed from ἀσχηρόν τι ποιεῖν (improper conduct: 5 2 18). But unprejudiced readers will not doubt that the tone and content of the novel's scenes is, despite occasional use of *sysition* or *sysaitoi* (mess; mess-mates) provoked by the essentially military settings, more to do with Socrates and with ordinary Greek symposia than with Sparta²⁹ or, for that matter, Persia.³⁰

Sex and pederasty

The Sparta of *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum* is notable for eugenic manipulation of marriage and institutionalized pederasty. Of the former there is no trace in *Cyropaedia*.³¹ Instead we get a romanticized image of marriage in the story of Panthea, a story which also provides an opportunity for Cyrus to display pity and *sōphrosynē* (moral self-control).³² Sex is a rare area where the elder and younger Cyrus diverge (cf. n. 63), for the latter maintained mistresses (*Anab.* 1 10 2) and was suspected of a liaison with the Cilician queen (1 2 12 f.). The hero of *Cyropaedia* resists sexual entanglement, recalling Agesilaus' alleged self-control – save that Agesilaus was resisting a boy (*Ages.* 5 4 f.).

Respublica Lacedaemoniorum claims that Lycurgus enjoined

relationships which could provide moral training and that *erastai* (lovers) and boys no more have sexual intercourse than do parents and children or siblings (2 12 f.). Xenophon makes clear that many people were unconvinced by this ideal picture – a picture which corresponds to other places in Xenophontic works where homoerotic relations are treated as a special case of that greatest of goods, friendship, and as something which may benefit the participants. In *Cyropaedia* there is certainly no homosexual activity. But it would also be hard to claim that there is institutionalized analogue to improving asexual friendship between *erastēs* and *erōmenos* (beloved). Three points may be noticed.

1) In speaking with Araspas about sex Cyrus does drop grammatically into talking about homosexual attraction. This may be fortuitous or an unconscious reflection of Xenophontic assumptions. In any case we have no reason to doubt that Cyrus is quite free from homosexual entanglements.

2) There is an explicitly labelled *paidikos logos* (story about boys) in 1 4 27 f. about a Median *kalos kagathos*, Artabazus, who finds excuses for kissing the young Cyrus and whose motive is unambiguously the prince's beauty of appearance, not just (or at all) of soul. His behaviour contrasts with that of Agesilaus who austerey resisted a temptation to kiss the beautiful Megabates (5 4 f.), but it is not clear that we are meant to think badly of Artabazus: later on he very properly berates Araspas for his sexual threats to Panthea (6 1 34) and (*pace* Tatum 1989: 175) this is surely not simply a reflection of homosexual zealotry. More important and less contentious is the fact that he is a Mede and therefore not central to the ideals of *Cyropaedia*. He represents behaviour unremarkable in Greek usage, but not treated as ideal – and not supposed to cohere with Spartan ideals, for Artabazus would fall foul of the injunction against being seen yearning for a boy's body (παιδὸς σώματος ὀρεγόμενος), even though all he gets from Cyrus is a few kisses.

3) *Cyropaedia* 2 2 28 offers another *paidikos logos* of sorts, the tale of the captain (*lochagos*) Sambaulas who goes everywhere

with an exceedingly ill-favoured soldier because he is such an obedient subordinate.³³ The situation is assimilated by Cyrus to the 'Greek fashion', but marked by no physicality, not even kissing. Conceivably, in the light of Agesilaus and Megabates, the story imports a Spartan ideal. And yet Sambaulas' refusal to kiss his favourite has negligible moral value, since he is so ugly: to kiss him, it is said, would require more effort than a programme of gymnastic exercises. In any case, the relationship is not integral to the idealized world of *Cyropaedia*: the reference to 'Greek fashion' once again distances it from centre-place in the utopia, and its true contribution to that utopia is simply to be a playful way of re-emphasizing the value of obedient and willing subordinates. If Xenophon was thinking about Sparta at all, he was actually gently guying its supposedly Platonic relationships. One may compare the Aglaitadas interlude earlier in the same dinner-party, which some see as poking fun at a 'Spartan' attitude to laughter.

Military matters

Formal (and trivial) similarities can be found.³⁴ So can divergences.

First, two points are made in the novel about tactics: (a) they are only a small part of generalship (*Cyr.* 1 6 12 f.; cf. *Mem.* 3 1 1 f.); (b) they do not consist only in being able to perform certain evolutions (8 5 15). These evolutions³⁵ bear a general resemblance to *RL* 11, but the parallels are inexact, since, for example, *RL* 11 4 has marching in two, three or six *enōmotiai* (platoons) abreast, whereas *Cyropaedia* 2 3 21 has four *lochoi* (companies), eight 'dekads' or sixteen 'pempads'.³⁶ The additional skills which Cyrus thought proper to a tactician – breaking an army into parts, placing them in useful positions, hurrying to reach a goal before the enemy – are absent in *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum*. Strictly, of course, the latter claims no more than that Spartans easily perform evolutions which professional drill-masters think difficult, so perhaps we should not perceive too extreme a contrast with *Cyropaedia*. But we cannot claim significant overlap either.

Second, the Spartan camp in *RL* 12 is circular. Soldiers carry weapons at all times and do not stray far when answering calls of nature. During daylight camp guards face inwards (against the helots), while the cavalry is used to watch the enemy. At night Sciritans and mercenaries act as forward pickets. Within the camp gymnastic exercises are the order of the day. The camp site is often moved. The last two points do recur in *Cyropaedia* (cf. 1 6 17; 2 1 28; 3 3 23), as does the principle of having night-time guards outside the camp (4 5 3, 6), though it is hardly distinctive (cf. *Oec.* 20 8). But there is not much further overlap with points mentioned in *Cyropaedia*, which include: (a) choice of a healthy location (1 6 16; 6 1 23); (b) choice of a location under cover of villages or hills (3 3 28); (c) housing of soldiers in 100-man tents to enhance corporate feeling; (d) paramount importance, not of security (as in *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum*) but of *Ordnung* (*Cyr.* 8 5 2 f.), with everything in a predetermined place – tents labelled with banners, Cyrus in the middle facing east, cavalry, archers and light-armed troops nearby and hoplites beyond as a sort of wall; (e) lighting of fires in front of and behind the camp. Barbarian camps typically have ditch and fortification (3 3 26, 63 f.), but this is attributed only to Assyrians and their allies. Since Cyrus does not behave thus he is perhaps more Greek, but not specifically Spartan.

Third, 5 3 35–59 elaborates upon Cyrus' order of march; 6 2 25 f. comments on provisions and other supplies for a long march and campaign. The former passage evokes no Spartan parallels, but Anderson (1970: 43) adduces *RL* 11 2 in connection with the latter and claims that Sparta and Cyrus shared a preference for having a centralized commissariat rather than simply telling soldiers to turn up with so-and-so many days' food. This may or may not have been true of Sparta, but *RL* 11 2 does not say that it was, since it refers solely to the provision and transport on waggon or pack-animal of tools for which there may be public need and which will presumably be used by the *cheirotechnai* (craftsmen) who figure in the mobilization order. It is here that a parallel might be essayed with *Cyropaedia*.³⁷

For example, 6 4 34 identifies shovel plus mattock and axe plus sickle as the *organa* of potentially common use which are carried on waggon or pack-animal. But the attitude in *Cyropaedia* is ambivalent. 6 2 37 does order the inclusion of smiths, carpenters and cobblers in the army. But 6 2 34 declares that 'we shall not find *cheirotechnai* everywhere' (implying in context that they are not taking their own) and that repairs to chariots or waggons can be done by anyone, given the relevant raw materials. On a slightly different point, it is worth noting that the materials in 6 2 32 f. include medical supplies. This corresponds to Cyrus' interest in health maintenance (1 6 15 f.; 6 1 23; 8 2 24) and in the treatment of the wounded (5 4 17) – something which is not a highlighted feature of Spartan military professionalism in *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum* (or elsewhere).

Finally, a number of miscellaneous items can be mentioned.

1) Cyrus introduces cavalry into Persia and creates a homotimate infantry, as well as devising innovations in chariotry (6 1 27) and machinery (6 1 51). None of this has particularly Spartan overtones. Agesilaus' creation of a cavalry squadron in Anatolia (*Ages.* 1 23; *Hell.* 3 4 15) is vaguely parallel – just as there is some similarity in narrative context between the competitions of 6 2 4 f. and the subsequent preparations at Ephesus (*Ages.* 1 25; *Hell.* 3 4 16 f.) – but it is not distinctively Spartan.³⁸ The more distinctive point in *Hipparchicus* 9 4 about the improvement of Spartan cavalry through introduction of foreigners is not actually comparable.

2) In the important matter of the disposal of booty (4 2 25 f.; 4 3 42 f.; 4 5 17, 38 f., 51; 4 6 11; 5 3 4; 7 2 5; 7 3 1; 7 5 35; 8 4 29) there is nothing quite akin to the Spartan *laphyropōlai* ('booty-sellers') – it is *magoi* who are prominent – or to the trick in *Agesilaus* 1 18.

3) Cyrus shows an inclination to conduct affairs by mass meeting (2 2 19; 2 3 1 etc.) much more reminiscent of *Anabasis* than of the Spartan army.

4) *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum* stresses the religious functions of a Spartan king on campaign. Indeed this seems to play a large

part in provoking Xenophon to declare the Spartans true military professionals (τεχνῖται τῶν πολεμικῶν). Religion is not lacking in *Cyropaedia*, but at least one principle is without Spartan analogue, viz. (1 6 2) the importance of the king being himself trained in divination – so that he shall not be at the mercy of experts.³⁹

5) Commentators (Bazin 1885; Prinz 1911) have compared 4 5 17 (Cyrus wants the Persians to send *optēres* and *phrastēres* along with reinforcements) with *RL* 13 5 on the ephors' supervisory role. If there is anything in this, it is evidently of minor significance, since when the reinforcements eventually arrive (5 5 3) there is no sign of the 'viewers' or the 'question-answerers'; and in any case these latter are not established magistrates.

6) Various parallels have been seen between Thymbrara and historical battles.⁴⁰ I shall not discuss here the merits of these parallels or of the implied interpretation of Leuctra, but merely note that if they were accepted they would actually associate Sparta not with the Persians but with their enemies. One is reminded of the evidently deliberate (in as much as easily avoidable) assimilation of Spartans and Assyrians in 4 2 1 f. (above, p. 134) and again moved to feel that, if Xenophon had really meant Persians to 'stand for' Spartans, he would have taken more care to avoid distracting equations.⁴¹

7) The strategic assumptions in *Cyropaedia* are generally undistinctive; but one may register one very un-Greek (let alone, un-Spartan) item, the covenant in 5 4 25 f. to conduct war without harming farm-land. For a parallel one may look to India (Megasthenes 715F4 = Diod. 2 40 4), though I doubt whether Xenophon knew this.

8) Bizos (1971: xxxviii n. 3) claims that *Cyropaedia* displays the 'héroisme tendu' of the Spartiate world. This is surely not true in any usefully substantial sense. The novel does not express the values of a world in which a man absent from Thermopylae through no fault of his own was hounded to suicide by public opinion,⁴² and the highlighted female character is not a 'with-it-or-on-it' Spartan mother but a romantic heroine. As we have

remarked before, the strain of militarism as such is not strong in *Cyropaedia*.

9) There is also, of course, no echo of that most characteristic of Spartan institutions, the *xenēlasia* (expulsion of foreigners: Thucydides 1 144 1; 2 39; Xenophon *RL* 14 4; Aristophanes *Birds* 1012; Plato *Laws* 950a ff.).

Education

Xenophon is not the only source on Persian education,⁴³ and the others contain occasional hints of Sparta. Ctesias 688F15 (54) describes Roxane as good at shooting and throwing weapons – in Persian terms ‘educated’ and perhaps reminiscent of Spartan women in the gymnasium. Nicolaus 90F103 (x) provides a largely Herodotean passage, but the statement that for the king to order you to be whipped was a good thing because it showed that he had remembered you conceivably (one can put it no stronger) has some relation to the whippings of the Spartan *paideia*. Less dubitably Plutarch *Artoxerxes* 3 applies the concept νομιζομένη ἀγωγή (customary upbringing) to the younger Cyrus’ education (the passage is printed as Ctesias 688F17, but the terminology may be Plutarch’s; and ἀγωγή does not perhaps *have* to evoke Sparta); and Arrian 5 4 5 writes that the Persians lived in a harsh land and their νόμιμα were as close as one could imagine to Λακωνικὴ παιδευσίς (Spartan education). Briant (1987) hovers between thinking this an observation dictated by Xenophon and one dictated by reality. Either way it does represent a Greek assimilation of the two systems and might count as evidence about how to read Xenophon. But it cannot be mandatory, and it must be stressed that the two authors (Plato and Strabo) who give extended – mutually dissimilar – accounts do so without any Spartan assimilation.⁴⁴

There are two relevant Xenophontic texts. The first is *Anabasis* 1 9 1 f. It is striking that Xenophon introduced *paideia* into Cyrus’ obituary at all. He did not have to in order to convey his view of Cyrus’ character, and none of the Greek obituaries in 2 6 take its subject back to childhood (though Proxenus’

connection with Gorgias is noted). Cyrus was very young when killed and his childhood represented a significant portion of his life, but education does not command a proportionate part of the obituary, which is largely about his exercise of *archē* and his single-mindedness in rewarding virtue and vice, so the merely chronological point is not determinative. Instead one suspects that Xenophon was too impressed by the distinctive *fact* of 'formal' Persian aristocratic education to be able to leave it out. One should stress that his Greek obituaries are also discourses emphasizing a single trait (i.e. exactly similar in type to 1 9, save for absence of anything on education); and one might also notice that Isocrates' *Evagoras* does not have a section on its subject's *paideia*.

Cyrus is educated with his brother and other elite children 'at the king's gates'. He learns *sōphrosynē* (moral self-control), acquires an ability to obey and give orders by observing the pattern of the king's rewards and punishments, becomes extremely respectful (αἰδημονέστατος), obedient, good with horses, exceptional at archery and javelin throwing, and, at an appropriate age, devoted to hunting. This last item may presuppose age groupings, but clearly neither this nor, for example, the prominence of obedience has to be attributed to a desire for a Spartan parallel. Rather they reflect Xenophon's perception of the facts.

The other Xenophontic text is *Cyropaedia* 1 2. There are, of course, divergences between this and what other sources have to say (cf. above, nn. 42, 43). The question is whether the extent or nature of this divergence compels us to regard it not only as not simply another version of the facts but also as a recycling of Spartan facts under Persian guise.⁴⁵ One notes immediately that the heir apparent is not exempt,⁴⁶ there are no 'gymnasium-educated' women,⁴⁷ suggestions of militarism are scarcely present, and (rather importantly) access to education and homotimate is limited by economic means, whereas at Sparta (RL 10 7; cf. Plato *Laws* 696a) financial insecurity (ἀσθένεια χρημάτων) was not supposed to disbar one from *homoios* status. Some call the *Cyropaedia* system more open,⁴⁸ which is a

debatable description, but in practical terms it certainly resembles the situation in classical Athens (cf. Beck 1964: 81; Golden 1990: 62). Still, apart from the fact that the products are (1 5 11 f.) ἀσκηταὶ τῶν καλῶν κάγαθῶν (trained exponents of 'good' values), tolerant of hard work, lack of sleep, hunger and water-drinking, and lovers of praise – characterizations undoubtedly applicable to Spartiates (cf. Arist. *Pol.* 1338b; Plat. *Laws* 633c; *RL* 5 7; Powell 1988: 223, 240), though also to other Xenophontic heroes (e.g. *Hell.* 6 1 15) – there are two obvious similarities: attention is drawn in both *Cyropaedia* and *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum* to the contrasts between the content of *paideia* to be described and what occurs in other states; and a system of age groups is involved. Yet pursuit of these points reveals distinctions.

The Persian laws on education begin, in their concern for the common good, from a different point from that in most *poleis*, whereas Spartan practice contrasts with the behaviour of those 'other Greeks' who claim to educate their children best. The possibility that Spartan and Persian education are regarded by Xenophon as comparable remains open. But the nature of the deviation from other models is differently stated. In *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum* ordinary (non-Spartan) educational practice involves: (i) *paidagōgoi* (slave companions); (ii) sending children to school to learn reading, music and wrestling; (iii) permission to children to wear shoes; and (iv) tolerance of over-eating. In *Cyropaedia* we are simply told that the norm is for the content of education to be left to parental initiative and the state to allow older people to adopt whatever lifestyle they wish; or for the principal stress to be on negative injunctions and punishment of non-compliance. *Cyropaedia* thus claims that Persia is unusual in having a standardly defined education system at all, whereas *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum* simply contrasts Sparta's system with other systematic Greek tendencies (which certainly existed, and could be legally regulated: Beck 1964: 80 ff.; Golden 1990: 62 f.). This is a real distinction (even if somewhat clouded by the objection to *paidagōgoi* in *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum* being that

they are appointed privately by each father) and Xenophon is making larger claims for Persia than for Sparta – hence certainly not straightforwardly assimilating them. In a later passage (1 6 31) attention is drawn to a contrast between Persian educational principles and (here specifically) Greek ones in their attitude to deception. We shall return to this later, as also to the question of the positive content of the two *paideiai*. The system of age groups is as follows:

Persia		Sparta	
?–16/17	<i>paides</i>	(7–18/9)	<i>paides</i>
16/7–26/7	<i>ephēboi</i>	(18/9–20)	<i>paidiskoi/meirakia</i>
		(20–30)	<i>hēbōntes</i>
26/7–51/52	<i>teleioi</i>	(30–?)	men beyond youth,
	<i>andres</i>		magistracy holders
51/2–	men above	(?–?)	<i>gerontes</i>
	military age,		
	<i>geraiteroi</i>		

Clearly there are notable differences in names and in age ranges.⁴⁹ In *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum*, *paideia* (in a sense) terminates at the end of group one, the division corresponding to the point at which the *paidagōgos* ceases to be relevant in ordinary Greek usage – though it turns out that the *paidonomos* ('boy-warden') has a role in connection even with *hēbōntes*. This makes interrelation of the two systems less than straightforward, conceptually and in practice. But it is reasonably clear that we must compare the *paides* in the two systems and then regard Persian *ephebes* as correlated with Spartan *paidiskoi/meirakia* and *hēbōntes* before going on to the mature men and elders; and in all cases what we are looking at is strictly speaking (in the terms of *RL* 5 1) the *epitēdeumata* (habits) appropriate to each age.

The mature men (*teleioi andres*) are fairly similar (military service and office-holding being the principal functions), but elsewhere distinctions obtrude. To start at the end, although Persian elders like Spartan ones act as judges in capital cases, they also so act in all other cases and they are not represented in

that or any other context as a *gerousia* or *gerontia* (council of elders): the stress in *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum* upon the noble competition in virtue which candidacy for the *gerontia* affords to aging Spartiates has no analogue in *Cyropaedia*. Contrariwise, the Persian elders as a whole constitute the electoral body for all magistrates (cf. also 1 5 5), a proposition not applicable to Sparta. Repeated use of *geraiteroi* (elders) rather than *gerontes* (as in *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum*) may also be a deliberate attempt to dissociate the two. Respect for elders is often adduced as a specifically Spartan feature of *Cyropaedia*,⁵⁰ but it is not that straightforward. In the light of the generational issue in classical Athens (Reinhold 1976), someone like Xenophon could be expected in any case to incorporate 'proper' respect for the old into a utopian construct. It was not a principle intrinsically alien to general Hellenic morality, after all, merely one which some thought inadequately realised in Athenian socio-political practice. To affirm its importance was to complain about democratic republicanism not (necessarily) to advocate adoption of Spartan habits.

The two Spartan groups between *paides* and mature men are not very distinctly characterized. *Paidiskoi* have to work hard (at what?) and be extremely decorous. *Hēbōntes* display *philoneikia* (competitiveness) – competition being encouraged in connection with selection for the 300 – and obedience. Cyrus started to be notable for modesty (*aidōs*), blushing before older people and becoming less talkative (temporarily, for the adult Cyrus is not specially laconic), as he approached being *proshēbōn* (1 4 4). This came a year or more before he left the *paides* (1 5 1), when he was at least three or four years younger than the Spartan *paidiskos*. So this particular comparison does not work. But he also displayed *aidōs* towards elders and obedience to *archontes* (like, respectively, the Spartan *paidiskos* and *hēbōn*) during his time as an *ephebe* (1 5 5; cf. 1 6 20), along with excellence in performing his duty and toughness, and the *ephebe* age-range includes that of the *paidiskoi* and overlaps with that of the *hēbōn*. So there is a sort of a link here. But there are also contrasts.

1) The account of the *ephebate* in 1 2 9 f. stresses development of the more general virtue of *sōphrosynē* rather than specifically *aidōs*.

2) Overall the roles of the *ephebes* are: (a) sleeping by the public buildings and acting as guards for the city, (b) accompanying royal hunting expeditions, thus acquiring military training and a tolerance of reduced diet, and (c) continuing to practise with bow and arrow and with javelin. This formulation is not dictated by any desire for a parallel with Spartan practice. Notice in particular that the focal point of public buildings (and palace) has no significant Spartan analogue and that in *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum* hunting is an activity, not of the *païs*, *paidiskos* or *hēbōn*, but of the mature Spartan – for whom, moreover, it is apparently not a public duty, being undertaken when no such duty has prior claim (ἐλ μὴ τι δημόσιον κωλύει: 4 7).

3) Cyrus and his Median friends already display *philoneikia* as *paides* (1 4 15) and neither they nor anyone else in the Persian model does so by brawling in the street as reported and recommended in *RL* 4 5–6.

4) Whereas a Spartan *hēbōn* is still under the supervision of the *paidonomos* (4 6), the Persian *ephebe* is supervised by men from the class of mature men and thus differently treated from the Persian *païs* whose supervisors are elders.

5) Married Persian *ephebes* may be excused from sleeping at the *archeia*. But the implied permission to sleep with their wives is not qualified by insistence on any of the sorts of secrecy which marked Spartan marital relations (cf. *RL* 1 5). Nor is attention drawn, as in *RL* 1 5, to the eugenic effects of limiting opportunities for intercourse. The reader of *Cyropaedia* will take it that the system is making a benevolent concession to the young married men not manipulating their sexuality *pro bono publico*.

The occupations and lessons of *paides* in the two systems come out rather differently. What is said about Sparta is partly dictated by formal contrast with the ‘ordinary’ situation in other Greek states, so we hear that Spartan *paides* are subject to the

paidonomos and his whip-carrying sidekicks (though also to that of any older citizen or *eirēn*: 2 10–11, 6 1), extremely respectful (αἰδῆμονες) towards officials and permitted no self-indulgence in clothes or food. Otherwise it is marked by the boys' thievery (and punishment if inefficient enough to get caught) and by a protestation that attachments between *paides* and older men are non-sexual. Both these points are explicitly or implicitly in contrast to the normal situation. Nothing is said about literacy, music or wrestling; perhaps it is taken for granted that in these there is no contrast between Sparta and the outside world. As for goals, it is said in connection with institutionalized thieving that the aim is to make Spartans extremely warlike (πολεμικώτατοι).

Persian *paides* (supervised by twelve elders or 'public teachers': 1 2 13, 15) on the other hand are trained particularly in justice (cf. 1 3 16), gratitude, *sōphrosynē*, obedience (cf. 1 6 20: laws teach to rule and be ruled; 2 1 24) and self-restraint in eating as well as in archery and javelin throwing (cf. 1 3 15). These virtues are not intrinsically un-Spartan, but one is bound to enter qualifications and note differences.

Gratitude is valued by Agesilaus: but in 4 2 it is a specifically financial matter and may perhaps be the same in 11 3 as well. Again obedience is a great Spartan source of pride (cf. what is said above about respect towards magistrates and also *RL* 2 14; 4 6; 5 2; 8 *passim*, *Mem.* 3 5 13; 4 4 15) and the deportment of Spartan *paidiskoi* is said to show their capacity for τὸ σωφρονεῖν. But is there a clear parallel in a Spartan context to the insistence in 1 6 22 that obedience be earned by wisdom on the part of the issuers of orders?⁵¹ Contemplation of North 1966 and Dover 1974 leaves me unconvinced that to regard *sōphrosynē* as an important virtue was necessarily to espouse specifically Spartan values (the situation is in some ways analogous to that with respect for the elderly: cf. p. 154); and I note that the *sōphrosynē* of *paidiskoi* merely consists in an extreme self-effacement (*aidōs*) and in *RL* 3 4 is accompanied by a comment on the lesser capacity of females for τὸ σωφρονεῖν which seems calculated to draw attention to common criticisms of Spartan women.

Self-restraint in eating is a shared feature, but the Persian version consists in not going to lunch until you are told and in preferring plain food (cf. Due 1989: 170 f.), whereas the Spartan consists less creditably in being given inadequate amounts (and therefore being forced to steal). Attention to justice is prominent in the younger Cyrus, who punished *kakourgoi* and *adikoi* (*Anab.* 1 9 13) and rewarded those who sought to excel in *dikaiosunē* (1 9 16, 19), but it is not a quality highlighted in *RL*; and among Agesilaus' virtues it has a strong, even limiting, connection with financial probity (4 1 f.; 8 8; 11 4 – its converse is *aischrokerdeia*, financial greed). Although 11 3 recalls the royal laws of *Oeconomicus* 14 7, one feels distant from a system whose schooling is built around practice of the pursuit of justice in all its varieties.

In the same critical vein one may mention two further points. First, the keynote of the Persian system is to suppress wrongdoing not by punishment but by aiming so to dispose educated people that they do not want to do wrong – a positive not a negative approach. A parallel appears to offer itself in *RL* 10 5: other states only punish wrong done to one's neighbour, but Lycurgus inflicted equal penalties on any who openly neglected to live the best life. But the parallel is largely illusory. For one thing the immediate context concerns only cowardice – on which topic 9, while affirming that the brave enjoy happiness (*eudaimonia*) and the cowardly suffer wretchedness (*kakodaimonia*), lays the whole stress on punishment of the latter, not exaltation of the former. For another the wider context is about compelling people to practise all the virtues in a public context (*δημοσίᾳ*: 10 4) or laying an irresistible necessity upon them to display the virtue of a citizen (*politikē aretē*: 10 7). One can appreciate the contrast further by considering *Cyropaedia* 3 3 52 f. Similar ideas recur here and there is a connection with bravery in battle. But the context is a more general one of moral improvement and the influences which produce the desired result are described not in terms of compulsion but of laws and teachers. One may add that in the figure of Aglaitadas (who

thinks that to improve someone you must make him weep: 2 2 14) Cyrus rejects a model of paedagogic behaviour which could without unreasonable prejudice be called “Spartan” (cf. Higgins 1977: 49).

Secondly, there is the issue of deception. Truthfulness is a common element in texts on Persian education (and something whose status in Persian values is confirmed from the Great King’s own mouth: DB *passim*; DNb 12 = XPl 13). Oddly it plays no part in formal statements of Persian *paideia* in *Cyropaedia* 1 2 or *Anabasis* 1 9, and indeed is not specially prominent as such in the *Cyropaedia* as a whole.⁵² But there is one important relevant text. In 1 6 31 f. we are told about an old-time teacher who taught deception (ψεύδεσθαι, ἐξαπατᾶν etc.). This is compared to what the Greeks do in teaching wrestling, but is said to have been forbidden in Persia by a *rhētra* (statute) which enjoined that children should simply, in Herodotean manner, be taught to tell the truth (ἀληθεύειν)! Xenophon is being wickedly playful here. Concerned to emphasize that Persian education rejects a notable feature of Sparta pedagogy, he employs a Spartan word (i.e. *rhētra*) to draw attention to what he is doing. Of course the prominent thing in *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum* (2 7) was specifically theft (cf. the interchange of Cheirisophus and Xenophon in *Anabasis* 4 6 14 f.; and Thucydides 5 9 5 with Powell 1989: 178). But general deceitfulness figured in criticism of the Spartan character in Athens (cf. Aristophanes *Peace* 1067 f.; Euripides *Andromache* 445 f., *Supplikes* 184; and Powell 1989: 177 on Thucydides 4 85 7; 108 5) and there can be little doubt about the subtext involved here. (An element of untrustworthiness is not lacking in the demonology of Persians too, of course, not least in the last chapter of *Cyropaedia*. But Hirsch (1985) reasonably argues that *Anabasis* at least is not intended by Xenophon to show that Persians are inherently more untrustworthy than Greeks in general – or Spartans in particular. It focuses on deceit in human affairs in general.)

Institutionally speaking there is one further characteristic of the Persian education and social system which invites comment,

viz. the Free Agora with palace and *archeia* which is the focus of the life of the educated classes and finds an analogy in the frequenting of the King's Gate in 7 7 85; 8 1 6 f., 15 f. The obvious parallel is the Thessalian Free Square to which Aristotle *Politics* 7 12 3 f. refers; unfortunately Aristotle simply adduces it as an analogy for arrangements in his ideal city, leaving it uncertain how many of the features of his version (a place of leisure for older citizens, adjacent to and below a temple which should be the site of the *syssitia* (messes) of the (themselves aged) magistrates) were actual features of the Thessalian one. In any event the similarity between Aristotle's description and Xenophon's consists more in the shared name and distinction from the commercial agora than in any more positive features. But we must register the fact that, if a Greek rather than oriental basis is to be postulated for the phenomenon, then it is Thessaly not Sparta which can claim the credit. Alternatively we may feel that it is only the name which Xenophon has borrowed from Thessaly to describe an institution which is either pure utopia or based on some awareness about organization of space in Eastern capitals (Knauth 1975).⁵³ What seems excluded is that the case has any primary and substantive connection in Xenophon's mind with Sparta.

As will be evident I feel the same can be said about the education issue as a whole. This is probably the area where readers have felt the strongest urge to identify a Spartan substratum – an urge based on the instinctive feeling that merely to postulate a state-approved *system* of education has (in Greek terms) a Spartan allure. One can only (i) repeat that although the *Cyropaedia* system is state-governed (as in Sparta), access to it is financially determined (as in Athens), and (ii) observe that *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum* and *Cyropaedia* express different attitudes about deviation in content from (Hellenic) normality (p. 152) and, though the two works are not contemporary and Xenophon *might* be expressing a new perception of Spartan oddity in the novel, the factual differences between his description of the two systems creates no prejudice in favour of such a

view. In fact even if one played down (i) and affirmed that the basic notion of a state-sponsored *paideia*, pursuit of which is necessary for those who wish to attain or retain a particular socio-political status, is Spartan in inspiration, one would have to concede that Xenophon has taken some care to distance the contents from the Spartan model. But it is also worth stressing that the mere principle of an orderly education system need not be something which could not have been suggested by Achaemenid facts.

The existence of other Greek accounts of Persian education is not due to simple copying of Herodotus or Xenophon and may be a fair sign of Greek awareness that 'education' played a significant role in Persian aristocratic practice. That the earliest Greek account, Herodotus', lacks elaboration is no proof that other texts are uninformed fakery. His treatment of Persian customs is unsystematic, so lack of discriminating detail about *paideia* is unsurprising. Moreover the curtness of the report that education lasts fifteen years and consists of ἵππεύειν καὶ τοξεύειν καὶ ἀληθεύειν (riding, shooting and telling the truth) probably represents a deliberate attempt to contrast plain Persian simplicity with the sophistication of Greeks or other barbarians (e.g., Egyptians). This matches one trend of thought about Persia in Herodotus and may owe something to Persian informants. The summary recurs in Symmachus' poem on Arbinas in a slightly different form, probably independently of Herodotus, and both forms can be seen as summaries of the widely disseminated manifesto of royal virtues preserved in DNb and XPI,⁵⁴ a text which Herrenschildt (1985) considers influenced Symmachus.

This manifesto is also the non-Greek text which comes closest to the topic of education, while certainly falling short: the Achaemenid king boasts of his moral values, his military skill and his riding and shooting, and ascribes them to Ahuramazda not to education. One may contrast Assurbanipal who included in his *Annals* a summary of his *bit-riduti* ('harem') education in writing, shooting, riding, hunting and tactics and formulated a more detailed version for another context.⁵⁵ But one must not

permit the contrast to turn into an *ex silentio* argument against the importance of education in Achaemenid royal or aristocratic values.

- 1) Our knowledge of Assyrian royal education is the accidental result of Assurbanipal's pride in his unusual scribal attainments.
- 2) As a usurper Darius could not boast of royal education and might not want to boast of 'ordinary' aristocratic education; and conservatism inclined Xerxes to repeat Darius' manifesto, not compose a new one.
- 3) The king does say (DNb 45 f. = XPl 50 f.) that Ahuramazda bestowed 'abilities (*hunara*) which I had the strength to carry (*atavayam brtanaiy*)'; this might (especially if 'abilities' covers the whole of the text, not just the military/physical skills bit) represent the attempt of a text which otherwise (like all Persian royal inscriptions) determinedly privileges Ahuramazda to hint that Darius and Xerxes had been receptive pupils.
- 4) Symmachus' understanding of riding, shooting and *aretē* (virtue) as 'what wise men [σοφοί] know' (σοφός being his equivalent for OP *yâumainiš* (DNb 40 = XPl 44): Herrenschildt 1985: 131) probably shows that he put an educational construction upon the text – or that intermediary informants had done it for him.⁵⁶

In short, *Cyropaedia* 1 2 is not radically inconsistent with Xenophon's presumptions about Persian education in *Anabasis* 1 9 1 f. or indeed with the general principles of Herodotus, Symmachus or the royal manifesto (stress on moral education as opposed to reading and writing in the *paides* class is quite in tune).⁵⁷ If it was external factors which stimulated Xenophon to enlarge upon education, those factors can perfectly well have been Achaemenid; and the elaborations are not specifically Spartan (notably so in the relatively objective matter of age group definition) but at most non-specifically Hellenic and in reality probably Xenophonic.⁵⁸

Conclusions

In the light of the above discussion (at least) two conclusions seem warranted. The first is that there is no reasonable sense in which *Cyropaedia* can be said to be a book about Sparta in which Persia is used as a mere disguise: the role of Sparta and Persia in other Xenophontic works creates no presumption in favour of such a view and the text itself affords it no support. Nor indeed would it be particularly reasonable to expect *Cyropaedia* to be a *roman à clef* of this sort. To disguise Sparta with Persia was surely from many readers' point of view to mask one unpleasant visage with another; and if we retort that, although there were readers for whom Persia and Sparta were equally unpalatable, Xenophon knew that there were other readers for whom that was not so, we end up with a paradox. Any impetus to seek Spartans behind the Persians of *Cyropaedia* must derive at least in part from puzzlement at Xenophon having written in praise of Persians and a suspicion that there must be a hidden agenda. But if we allow that there were recognisably readers for whom praise of Persia was not anathema, we arguably remove the need to search for that hidden agenda and might as well allow that Xenophon wished to present a Persian ideal (or an ideal of his own in Persian garb) in its own right. Of course, he certainly did not do this in a spirit of historical verisimilitude: as I have shown elsewhere (Tuplin 1990) the oriental colour of *Cyropaedia* is underdeveloped, even by comparison with contemporary and earlier Greek literature about the Achaemenid state. But it is very hard to catch him out attributing institutions to Persians which are both demonstrably non-Persian and significantly Spartan. This leads us to the second conclusion, which is more important and more contentious but (I think) valid. It is that we actually have little reason to regard Xenophon's formulation of his ideal in *Cyropaedia* as being positively and distinctively grounded upon Sparta at all. Again casual and secondary Xenophontic texts create no presumption in favour of such a role for Sparta: when Xenophon writes about Persia he is

writing about a real Persia and real Persians – seen through Greek eyes certainly, but not fitted to a Spartan template and sometimes contrasted with Spartan models whether to the latter's advantage (*Agésilas*) or, more interestingly, disadvantage (see pp. 132, 134); and when he writes of Sparta he does not give the impression of conferring blanket approval upon a supposedly ineluctable paradigm of perfection. (Even *Agésilas* is perfect personally, not as a Spartan cut-out.) As for the novel itself, the great bulk does not by any reasonable reckoning evoke Spartan parallels at all. When there may appear to be grounds for at least raising the possibility, further investigation repeatedly produces unfavourable results and, if anything, awakens the occasional suspicion that the author has enticed one to ponder a Spartan connection with the deliberate intention of establishing that no such connection exists.

It is probable that few would have been inclined to view the matter otherwise and that the literature would be less characterised by statements to the effect that such-and-such a feature of the novel is 'based on Spartan models *even though there are divergences*' except for two initial prejudgments, that Xenophon is a Laconophile and that he is not to be taken seriously.⁵⁹ A conjunction of these views leads to the feeling that Xenophon was barely capable of formulating paradigmatic ideals of his own (i.e. ones deduced selectively and discriminately from the whole range of his own experiences and observations) and was therefore unreflectively dependent on stereotypes which, since he was Laconophile, were inevitably Spartan.⁶⁰ It is certainly true that the apparently bland and even *naïf* literary manner characteristic of Xenophon serves the case for his intellectual respectability rather ill. But I am absolutely convinced that one must not allow oneself to be deceived by surface appearances or indeed be prejudiced by late twentieth-century liberal distaste for the principles and practice of manipulative leadership.⁶¹ I am also sure that we must recognize in Xenophon a much greater detachment about Sparta, and even willingness to criticize her, than has been and still is fashionable.⁶² Both of the

prejudgments are flawed. So, automatically, is the conclusion; and so are attitudes to *Cyropaedia* which presuppose that conclusion. Xenophon's personal experiences offered him the opportunity to see merits and failings in both Spartans and Persians (not to mention persons of other origin), did not require him to subsume or submerge the latter in the former and did not inhibit him from devising a model of behaviour which can draw upon and (above all) be independent of both. It is not hard to instance characteristics of the hero of *Cyropaedia* which are equally paralleled in the younger Cyrus and in Sparta,⁶³ and although Agesilaus was 'perfectly good' (τελέως ἀγαθός: *Ag.* 1 1) and the elder Cyrus 'supremely adorned with virtue' (πάντων μάλιστα κεκοσμημένον τῇ ἀρετῇ), whereas the younger Cyrus is (merely) 'good' (ἀγαθός), essentially the view of Hirsch (1985: 74) that the central figure of the novel derives from his late fifth-century namesake is a truer simplification than any view that he derives from Sparta.⁶⁴ But it is just as important to emphasize that the range of parallels actually extends over the whole Xenophonic *corpus*, as will be evident to any reader of Breitenbach (1950). Xenophon undoubtedly believed in the existence of an essentially unitary ideal of leadership. There is therefore inevitably a tendency for the picture of its eastern exemplification to select features which are shared with western ones. (The suppression of distracting oriental décor is in the same spirit.) But so far as Sparta in particular is concerned, her shadow lay heavy on the political history of fourth-century Greece (as Xenophon was perfectly well aware), and he saw no cause for it to do the same to his own reflections about a more perfect world.

Abbreviations

- ARAB D.D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia* (Chicago 1926/1927).
DB Darius Behistun inscription: see R.G. Kent, *Old Persian*

(New Haven 1953).

- DNb Darius Naqš i-Rustam inscription b: see R.G. Kent, *Old Persian* (New Haven 1953); W. Hinz, *Altiranische Funde und Forschungen* (Berlin 1969) 53 ff.
- DPe Darius Persepolis inscription e: see R.G. Kent, *Old Persian* (New Haven 1953)
- DPg Darius Persepolis inscription g: see F. Weissbach, *Die Keilinschriften der Achämeniden* (Leipzig 1911) 85
- XPl Xerxes Persepolis inscription I: see W. Hinz, *Altiranische Funde und Forschungen* (Berlin 1969) 45 ff.

Notes

- 1 The Spartan focus of *Hell.* 2 3 11–7, 5 27 is also notable (Tuplin 1993).
- 2 Comparison of the Chalybes' knife with a Spartan 'sickle' (*xuēlē*) in *Anab.* 4 7 16 is merely a neutral informative gloss.
- 3 Lycon is the richest of men since he values the (Persian) king's wealth less than his son Autolycus (*Symp.* 3 13); the (Persian) king's power is a boon to which Critobulus prefers beauty (4 11); the Persians ruled Asia and Europe (to Macedonia) and boasted the greatest ever power, resources and deeds – which increases Athens' credit for defeating them (*Mem.* 3 5 11).
- 4 8 6: Persians and Odrysians hold downhill races without damaging their horses; 1 17; 6 12: mounting; 12 11 f.: cavalry weaponry.
- 5 7 42: mistress/servant; 11 25: judge /condemned litigant. A more 'normal' Persia-women comparison is that in *Hell.* 3 4 19 = *Ag.* 1 28, where the white, flabby bodies of Persian prisoners make them seem contemptibly woman-like in the eyes of a Spartan king's troops.
- 6 E.g., *Mem.* 3 5 13: Spartan model is second best; *Symp.* 8 39: Athenian political models involve *philosophia*, Spartan ones only *askēsis*.

- 7 A series of contrasts is adduced: excessive wealth/simple lifestyle; seclusion, difficulty of access/visibility, ease of access; slow negotiation/instant answers to petitions; gourmandize, sleeping arrangements/simple food, could sleep anywhere; avoidance of heat, cold like an animal/acceptance of same as part of the natural order.
- 8 Rzchiladze (1980: 313) notes Xenophon's fair-mindedness to barbarians.
- 9 3 2 37: Cheirisophus should lead the square 'since he is also a Spartan'. 7 6 37: Spartans are seen as the best commanders. 4 1 18–19: the Spartan Leonymus, who is described as *καλός* (fine) and *ἀγαθός* (good) is killed by arrow through shield and jerkin. (One recalls Thuc. 4 40 2 on arrows and *καλοὶ καγαθοί* at Sphacteria, but cannot know how many contemporary readers would do so.) 4 8 25: Dracontius, selected to organise celebratory games, chooses particularly hard ground for the wrestling. 6 6 35: Cleander (the good Spartan commander in 6–7) wants to lead the army when he sees with what discipline it carries out orders.
- 10 Dexippus, who fails to bring back ships (5 1 5 f.) and then causes bad trouble in 6 6 1 ff., is only a *perioec*, but in 6 1 32 effectively claims solidarity as a Laconian with the Spartiate Anaxibius (just as Neon of Asine deports himself with what we might call the arrogance of a Spartiate). Anaxibius and Aristarchus cut disreputable figures.
- 11 Geography is weak in *Cyropaedia*: there is no realization that the Perso–Median War with Assyria is one between plateau and Mesopotamian plain. See Stadter (1991: 478) on the unreality of geographical space.
- 12 The description of Medo–Persian relations in 1 5 3 recalls Cleigenes' description of the Olynthian *Bundesstaat*, a description explicitly comparing the latter with Sparta's alliance system (*Hell.* 5 2 18 f.). In both texts, though, the descriptions are hostile; and what *Cyr.* 1 5 3 illustrates is an unsurprising conceptualization of foreign arrangements in familiar Greek terms: thus the datum of the Mandane

marriage is generalised into *epigamia* (right of intermarriage, for which cf. also 3 2 23 (Armenia–Chaldaea) and 7 4 5 (Carian factions)). Xenophon is not in fact assimilating Media–Persia to the Olynthian *Bundesstaat* or the Peloponnesian League. Notice also that in *Cyr.* 3 1 10 Xenophon does not take an opportunity fully to assimilate the relations between Media and Armenia with that between Sparta and her (defeated) allies, omitting (as in 7 4 9) the ‘same friends and enemies’ formula.

- 13 On that topic see Tuplin (forthcoming).
- 14 Compare the view on another historical oddity, Cyrus’ death in bed and not in battle in central Asia, in Sancisi-Weerdenburg (1985).
- 15 It is perhaps merely frivolous to observe that Spartans called Persians *xeinoi* (‘strangers’, a word often carrying the overtone of *honoured stranger*) not barbarians – especially if it is merely a specific example of a general Spartan tendency to employ this word.
- 16 Arist. *Vesp.* 1170 f. For other texts cf. Geddes (1987: 309, 321).
- 17 In reference to respect for age (2 80), extreme hostility to manual or craft work (2 166: a passage on the *machimoi* (warriors), whom Lloyd (1988 ad loc.) regards as assimilated to *homoioi* (equals)) and bestowal upon certain functions (e.g., town criers, pipe-players, cooks) of hereditary status (6 60).
- 18 Besides those discussed below note the following: (i) Antisthenes’ *Cyrus*, *Cyrus* or *On kingship*, *Cyrus* or *Eromenos* and *Cyrus* or *Kataskopos* (Diog. Laert. 6 15 f.); (ii) Aeschylus *Persae* 768: *Cyrus* the intelligent and rational founder of empire; (iii) Cicero *De Rep.* 1 43: *Cyrus iustissimus... sapientissimusque rex* – the exemplary king, whose rule still cannot be perfect because autocracy is imperfect; (iv) Isocrates 9 37. In Plat. *Epist.* 311a, a passage on the natural link of *σύνεσις* and power, *Cyrus’* colloquy with Solon and Croesus (sic) is an example of the meetings of the wise and the

powerful about which people like to read. In view of some of the other examples (Pausanias, Periander, Creon) this passage need not reflect idealization of Cyrus.

- 19 Cf. Hoistad (1948) who claims that the Heracles comparison showed that Antisthenes followed a tradition that Cyrus was originally a slave or servant. It is not actually clear whether exploitation of the two figures occurred in single literary contexts.
- 20 The detailed structure is as follows. A. *Breach of oaths*: betrayal of relatives brings most honour (2–4). A'. *Subsidiary summary*: the model of behaviour in 2–4 makes Asiatics more inclined to impiety and injustice (5). B. *Financial injustice* (which keeps rich out of the army) (6). B'. *Subsidiary summary*: impiety to gods and injustice to men (i.e. everything in 2–6) means an attacker can roam the empire at will without resistance and that Persian γνῶμαι (attitudes) are much worse than of old (7). C. *Physical culture* (8–12): spitting; nose blowing; eating once a day; excessive drinking; fasting on march; hunting (some do hunt, but the value judgment by others is reversed). D. Education (13–14): no horsemanship (there is *paideia*, but not horses); bribery replaces justice; use of poison. E. Softness (15–18): abandonment of Persian rigour and retention of Median dress (what was adopted later is all that remains); couches and carpets (if the implication is that carpets have been added later to mere padded beds); special breads, relish (nothing known before is lost, there are merely additions); thick winter clothes, artificial summer shade (addition of gloves, etc. to ordinary clothes and of parasols to natural shade); owning numerous drinking-cups and not caring if acquired dishonestly, injustice and unprincipled acquisitiveness being rife. F. Military failings (19–26): luxurious saddle cloths; horsemen recruited from cooks etc.; use of neither long distance nor close range weapons; use of chariots (crews fall out before reaching goal); fight battles but need Greek help.
- 21 I leave two casual Spartan parallels in a footnote. In 6 1 10

Artabazus expresses the paradox that life on campaign with Cyrus is a feast, whereas his old life at home was like being on campaign (τὰ μὲν οἶκοι στρατεῖαν οὔσαν, τάδε δὲ ἑορτήν). This evokes the idea of life in Sparta (for a Spartiate) being perpetual war (Isoc. 6 81; Plat. *Laws* 666e; Arist. *Pol.* 1324b; Plut. *Lyc.* 24), though Artabazus is not thinking of anything like the helots. In 5 4 15 the Cadusian leader wants to do something famous (λαμπρόν τι ποιῆσαι) and ends up in difficulties: the incident recalls Phoebeidas (*Hell.* 5 2 28) and Herippidas (4 1 21).

- 22 Knauth (1975: 53) described it as a *Musterbeispiel* of Greco-Iranian synthesis. See also Sancisi-Weerdenburg (1985).
- 23 Decidedly an area where (Tatum 1989: 53) Cyrus 'transcends' Persian virtue. For *nomos* in various senses cf. 1 3 2; 4 27; 6 34; 2 2 14; 3 3 52; 4 5 17; 5 1 10 f., 3 18, 4 22, 5 6; 6 3 20; 7 5 73; 8 1 2, 7 f.
- 24 Anderson (1970: 152) draws the latter parallel, which is less ill-judged than the blanket comparison of the *dēmotai* with various Spartan serf- and under-classes found in some older works (e.g., Prinz 1911). But the comment (*Cyr.* 2 3 13) that *dēmotai* are 'naturally' trained for warfare, though a pleasantry, is not quite what one would expect a Spartiate to say about the *neodamōdeis*. Notice also the lack of attempt in 8 1 43, 2 4 to assimilate Cyrus' contented, dog-like slaves with the helots.
- 25 Whether genuine militarism marked real Achaemenid ideology cannot be investigated here. I note in passing that the king's use of a single word, *kara*, for 'army' and 'people' is a perfectly ambiguous *datum*.
- 26 Cf. *RL* 5 4, Critias 88 B6, 33 for the Spartan ban; *Cyrop.* 1 3 11; 8 8 10, adduced by Prinz (1911) have no special relevance to this rule.
- 27 Material in Geddes (1987) about the Athenian move to egalitarian moderation of dress is important here. But note also Miller (1989). On Spartan dress cf. e.g., Thuc. 1 6 4; Arist. *Pol.* 1294b.

- 28 1 3 4–12 (Media); 1 5 1; 2 2 1 ff.; 2 3 17 (invitation to dinner as reward), 2 3 21 ff.; 3 2 25; 5 2 16 f.; 8 4 1–27.
- 29 Contrast Ollier (1933/43: I 108, 434 f.); Tigerstedt (1965: 179). The good humour seems well removed from the picture in David (1989) of the role of laughter in Spartan society.
- 30 Sancisi-Weerdenburg (1980: 225) wanted to associate 8 4 7–23 with traditional Iranian word-contests, adducing: (i) the trio of interlocutors (besides Cyrus); (ii) the elements of riddle, humour and paradox; (iii) the references to truth in 8 7 10 ('shall I tell the truth?', 'certainly, no question requires a false answer'). A stronger case could theoretically be made about 2 2 1–31, where there are three interlocutors, issues of humour and truth are central and there is a stronger sense of contest between the speakers. But it seems wildly pessimistic to suppose that anything in either scene could not be the unaided product of purely Greek dialogue-writing.
- 31 Bazin (1885) cited *Cyr.* 1 2 4 as a parallel for *RL* 1 6; but that is precisely what it is not. One has much more sympathy with the view that 8 4 17 f. is making fun of eugenics (cf. Lehmann 1853: 24).
32. He does not take sexual advantage of Panthea, though says that Araspas can have Panthea, if she will agree: no inhibitions about procuring adultery restrain him. But this reflects Greek assumptions about the availability of female POW's not Cyrus' moral character.
- 33 The Sambaulas story exemplifies Cyrus' arrangement of εὐχαριστότεροι λόγοι (rather charming conversations) which are also useful, while *Ages.* 8 1 associates the quality of being charming with the telling of *paidikoi logoi*.
- 34 The following appear in, e.g., Bazin (1885), Prinz (1911), Delebecque (1957: 385): (a) Army structure: *Cyr.* 2 3 21 (taxiarchs, lochagoi, dekadarchs, pempadarchs), *RL* 11 4 (polemarchs, lochagoi, pentekonteres, enomotarchs) – avoidance of precise nomenclature-parallel is perhaps

unsurprising, though how strongly one feels so depends on the passion of one's interest in military organizations; (b) Wearing of a crown in battle (*RL* 13 8; *Cyr.* 3 3 40) – one of the least interestingly characteristic items in the *RL* section (cf. *Anab.* 4 3 17); (c) Purple coloured clothes and bronze shields: *RL* 11 3; *Cyr.* 6 4 1; *Ag.* 2 7.

- 35 Cf. also 2 3 21 f. (column into phalanx) and 7 5 4 f. (*anaptuxis* (lit. 'unfolding')).
- 36 Delebecque (1957: 385) adduces the parallel without noting the inexactitude. The decimal system can certainly be claimed as Persian.
- 37 Cf. Bazin (1885), Delebecque (1957: 385).
- 38 Cyrus' cavalry-creation, unlike Agesilaus', did not result from defeat. In any case nothing significantly Spartan could be made of it; Persia was originally not a cavalry-society (*Cyr.* 1 3 3) and is turned into one, whereas Sparta never became one. Due (1989: 196) ignores this.
- 39 On Spartan kings and religion cf. Powell (this volume) 290. The distinction between Sparta and *Cyr.* 1 6 2 is exemplified in *Hell.* 3 3 4: Agesilaus makes the sacrifices, a diviner interprets them. We lack the information to know whether the prayers at frontiers (e.g., *Cyr.* 2 1 1, 3 2 22) have any specific link with Spartan *diabatēria* (frontier rituals). In *Anabasis* Cyrus is not presented as notably obsessed with religious niceties. That role is reserved for Xenophon himself.
- 40 Anderson (1970: 170, 173, 182 etc.). (i) Egyptians = Thebans (deep formation), (ii) Croesus' enveloping move = Spartans at Nemea, (iii) Cyrus' ambush = Thebans at Leuctra (also Demosthenes in *Thuc.* 3 107).
- 41 There is something of Cunaxa in Thymbrara as well: Cyrus and his entourage (*Anab.* 1 8 5 – odd that Bazin (1885) saw fit to talk about Spartan royal escorts here), going the rounds (1 8 12 f.), watchword (1 8 16), prominence of Egyptians (1 8 9), Artagereses (1 7 11; 8 24). Tatum (1989: 181) notes parallels between Abradatas' and Cyrus' deaths.

- 42 Hdt 7 231; and cf. Ehrenberg (1937).
- 43 Apart from texts mentioned below note Herodotus 1 136 2 (horseriding, archery and truth-telling (age 5–20)), the Arbinas poem (cf. n. 52) (horseriding, archery and *aretē*, virtue), Nicolaus 90F67 (Cyrus the Elder a devotee of *philosophia* as result of education by *magoi*), Plut. *Artox.* 3 (Cyrus is taught *mageuein*, to act as a *magos*). Isoc. 4 150 f. presents Persian *paideusis* as the source of military enervation, but without details.
- 44 Strabo (733–4). Teachers: the ‘soundest men’ (*sōphronestatoi*). Period: 5–24 years (no subdivision). Curriculum: horseriding, archery, truth-telling but also various other things, including agricultural and other skills, etc., physical hardiness, hunting, survival skills, gymnastics. Plato *Alcib.* 121d f. Period: two age groups (7–14; 14 plus). Curriculum: horseriding and hunting in group 1 and moral education by royal teachers (*paidagōgoi*) chosen as excelling in wisdom, justice, *sōphrosynē* and bravery in group 2. Zoroastrian *mageia* is included (the responsibility of the wisest *paidagōgos*) and truthfulness gets in as the task of the just *paidagōgos*. The whole construct (including the care bestowed by eunuchs on the infant to mould its limbs to be as beautiful as possible) is adduced in contrast to the negligible attention paid to the *paideia* of an Athenian aristocratic child. This is ironic (if the author is Plato); by the time of *Laws* Plato thought the Persian system flawed by the royal children’s bad upbringing. This is why Cyrus and Darius were ‘good’ kings and Cambyes and Xerxes not.
- 45 Cf. Rawson (1969: 50), Briant (1987: 7 f.). Contrast Hirsch (1985: 87). Stadter (1991: 463 n. 4) accepts that the *paideia* is influenced by Spartan methods and Xenophon’s own notions (citing Briant 1987).
- 46 He does, of course, spend part of the time away in Media.
- 47 *RL* 1 4; Ar. *Lys.* 78 f.; Eur. *Androm.* 595 f. There is no *krypteia* either (1 2 12 does not provide it), but then it is absent in *RL* too.

- 48 Rawson (1969: 50); Carlier (1978: 142); Due (1989: 221).
- 49 For the Spartan ages see Hodkinson (1983: 242, 245 f.). Crete provides a parallel for 17 being a significant age (Willets 1965: 113 f.). The 'Persian' age-groups recur in *Cyr.* 8 7 6.
- 50 1 5 1; 8 7 10; *RL* 10 2; *Mem.* 3 5 15. See n. 17 for respect for the old as a point of similarity between Sparta and Egypt.
- 51 The same goes for Persia. Obedience to (royal) law is prominent in Persian royal inscriptions and there is other evidence for the king's law (cf. Tuplin 1987b: 112–3; *DPg* 12 ff.); but many Greeks would have thought the situation had too much autocracy and not enough law (*DPe* 9 actually boasts of subjects' fear of the king). 'Ruling and being ruled' recalls Thucydides' Spartan army in which virtually everyone is a commander of some sort (5 66 4; Powell (this volume) 274); but Xenophon already deploys the idea in his description of the younger Cyrus' education (above, p. 151).
- 52 Most references are insignificant. 'Horse-riding is the truest preparation for war': 1 2 10 (cf. 8 1 34). Casual talk of truthfulness in dialogues: 1 6 12, 22; 2 2 14, 22; 4 1 23; 5 5 10, 33; 8 3 42, 44. Not raising false hopes: 1 6 19. Accurate reports: 2 4 31; 6 3 17. More interesting is the 'trial' of the Armenian king, which starts with a warning that lying is particularly hated and impedes mercy (3 1 9) and repeats the point three times in quick succession (10, 11, 12). Yet a remark that the rebel 'broke his word and no longer preserved the treaty with us' (ἐψεύσατο καὶ οὐκέτ' ἐμπέδου τὰς πρὸς ἡμᾶς συνθήκας) is not really a reproduction of the Achaemenid attitude to lies (*DB passim*; *DNb* 11 f.) but an ordinary enough Greek manner of speech. The dependence of benefits for Hyrcanians and Gobryas on their promises to Cyrus being true (4 2 7, 13; 6 10; 5 2 8) is similarly lacking in special ethnic character. See also above, n. 29.
- 53 The absence of ordinary Greek-style *agorai* (market-places) in Persia is noted in *Hdt.* 1 153 2. The *agora* used for

- public humiliation in Plut. *Artox.* 14 could very well be of the Xenophontic sort.
- 54 This assumes that ἀληθίζεσθαι and ἀρετή represent in different ways the moral qualities expounded in the Persian text. For Symmachus' poem see Bousquet (1975; SEG 28 1245; CEG ii 888); Herrenschildt (1985). DNb appears on Darius' tomb at Naqš i-Rustam, but copies existed at Susa and Persepolis and XPl is also from Persepolis. The incorporation of DNb 50 ff. into an Aramaic version of DB found in Egypt (Sims-Williams 1981; Hinz 1988) strikingly illustrates the manifesto's circulation quite separately from the tomb-context in which modern scholars first met it. A Greek version has been inferred from Onesicrit. ap. Strab. 15 3 8, Plut. 172f, Athen. 434d (cf. Calmeyer 1983: 161, 1988: 109 f.; Schmitt 1988: 26 f.) and (as with DB) is not unlikely. OP *marika*, whence Μαρικᾶς = Hyperbolicus in Eupolis (Cassio 1985; Morgan 1986), is how the king addresses his subject in DNb 50 ff.
- 55 Annals: ARAB ii § 767; Streck (1916: 2 ff.); Piepkorn (1933: 28 ff.); Aynard (1957: 29 f.). Fuller account: Streck (1916: 252 ff.); ARAB ii § 986. More generally see Labat (1972); Grayson (1991: 159). Pelling (1990: 221 n. 33) suggests that Xenophon's interest in Cyrus' childhood was influenced by that of eastern texts in politicians' (*sic*) childhoods.
- 56 I shall not speculate about the bearing on this topic (if any) of Darius' 'invention' of OP cuneiform (if that is what DB 4.70 is about, a much debated issue). The supposition that the Macedonian Pages (Arr. 4 13 1; Curt. 5 1 42; 8 6 2 f.) were copied from long-established Achaemenid practice (Kienast 1973) would provide something very relevant; but it has to be regarded as uncertain. (This will be discussed by Pierre Briant in his contribution to *Achaemenid History* vol. VIII.)
- 57 This does not mean that the analogy in Herrenschildt (1985: 128 n. 6) between *sōphrosynē* and hatred of ingratitude (*Cyr.* 1 2 7–8) and DNb 13 f., 24 f. = XPl 14 f.,

- 26 f. is specially compelling. Nor, really, are control of anger (DNb 13 f.), protection of weak against strong and vice versa (DNb 6 f.; 55 f. (as read by Sims-Williams 1981; Hinz 1988)) and control of fear by reason (DNb 35 f.) specially stressed, though neither they nor the invitation to the subordinate to display his qualities (Hinz 1988: 478 f.) is inconsistent with the novel's principles.
- 58 Despite *Oec.* 4 6 f. (above, p. 130) Xenophon does not incorporate agriculture or gardening into the curriculum. (They appear, along with *technai*, in Strabo; and Assurbanipal appears to consort with artisans.)
- 59 The quotation is from Tigerstedt (1965: 178) (*italics added*), but typifies a tendency to assume that Sparta must be determinative which can survive perception of the actual facts.
- 60 A sympathetic reader such as Tatum is immune. 'Cyrus amounts to much more than the sum of Socrates, Cyrus and Agesilaus' (255); '[Xenophon's ideal is] clearly a distillation of the practical experiences he had had and the people he had known' (53).
- 61 Tatum (1989: xviii) notes the applicability of *Cyropaedia* principles to running of an academic department in a modern university. Those who must perform such a task *may* wryly endorse the point; for those who do not, it will only increase a sense of alienation from the work.
- 62 This is very evident in *Hellenica*, where Xenophon is equally detached and critical about other states, including Athens (see Tuplin 1993). Such waspishness also appears in *Cyropaedia*. I note two cases: (i) Cyrus excuses the Armenian king's error in executing Tigranes' tame '*sophist*' (3 1 14) as human and venial. Given the clear analogy with Socrates, this seems at first sight remarkably tolerant (cf. Due 1989: 77 f.; Stadter 1991: 489 n. 57). But the king is otherwise portrayed as far from sensible (cf. Tatum 1989: 95 on the contrast between incompetent king and capable son) and Xenophon is arguably 'forgiving' the Athenians for killing Socrates in a very patronizing fashion; (ii) Similarly cruel

- (Due 1989: 39 notes) is the equation of *isēgoria* (equal right of speech) to the disorderly conduct of a Median banquet (1 3 10).
- 63 Use of rewards (*Cyrop.* 2 1 23 f., 2 18 f., 3 1 f., 4 9; 3 3 6; 6 2 4; 8 1 39; *Ages.* 1 25; 2 8; *Anab.* 1 9 *passim*); gift-giving (*Cyrop.* 1 5 5; 8 2 2, 7, 4 6; *RL* 15 4; *Anab.* 1 9 25); securing men's love (*Cyr.* 7 1 38; *Ages.* 8 1; *Anab.* 1 9 28); reliability of oath (*Cyr.* 4 2 8; *Ages.* 1 10 f.; 3 1 f.; *Anab.* 1 2 2; 9 7); generous treatment of friends and subordinates (*Cyr.* 3 3 4; 5 1 28, 2 12; 8 1 23, 26, 2 13; *Anab.* 1 9 28; *Ages.* 2 21); clemency (*Cyr.* 3 1 7–37; 4 4 10 f.; *Anab.* 1 4 8 f., 6 1 ff.; *Ages.* 11 12); personal bravery (*Cyr.* 1 4 8, 21; *Anab.* 1 7 9 f.; 8 24; 9 6; *Ages.* 2 13; 6 2); welcome/tolerance of physical effort/discomfort (*Cyr.* 1 5 12, 6 8, 25; 2 7 5, 74–82; 8 1 31, 36, 38; *Ages.* 5 1; 9 5; *RL* 12 5–6; *Hell.* 6 1 12); never eating except after physical exertion (2 1 29; 8 1 36; *Oec.* 4 29); shown by signs to be favoured by gods (*Cyr.* 1 6 1; 2 4 19; 4 2 15; *Anab.* 1 4 19; *Hell.* 7 1 30–1); desire to help friends and harm enemies (*Anab.* 1 9 11; *Cyr.* 5 3 32; a general Greek sentiment). I cannot believe that designation of Cyrus as father (8 1 4, 44, 2 9) has more to do with *Ages.* 1 38; 7 3 than with *Hdt.* 3 89 3.
- 64 Due (1989: 196) claims the novel's hero resembles Agesilaus more than the younger Cyrus; but among the qualities of Agesilaus which she highlights only patriotism is hard to parallel in the younger Cyrus.

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VI

'BLIND PLOUTOS': CONTEMPORARY IMAGES OF THE ROLE OF WEALTH IN CLASSICAL SPARTA

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The 'Blind Ploutos' in my title is not the personification of Wealth found in Aristophanes' play of that name and more generally in Athenian popular morality, a representation which expressed the idea 'that there is no correlation between possessions and merit' (Dover 1974: 110). It derives rather from a statement in Plutarch's *Life of Lykourgos* (10 3): 'so it was in Sparta alone, of all the cities under the sun, that men could have that far-famed sight, a Ploutos blind and lying as lifeless and motionless as a picture.'

Plutarch makes this statement in the specific context of Lykourgos' supposed creation of the common messes: the rich man could neither use nor enjoy nor even see nor display his abundant means when he went to the same meal as the poor man. The statement comes, however, as the culmination of the description of a range of measures which the lawgiver is said to have introduced in the field of property – the redistribution of land, the withdrawal of gold and silver currency, and the prohibition of superfluous craft production. The statement is anticipated earlier (at 9 4) when Plutarch says that 'men of large possessions had no advantage over the poor because their wealth found no public outlet but had to be stored at home in idleness.' 'Blind Ploutos' was clearly Plutarch's vision of the general role of wealth throughout Spartiate life, a vision so central to his image of Spartan society that he placed his

disquisition on property arrangements high among the list of Lykourgos' achievements, second only to the lawgiver's establishment of Sparta's famous political institutions.

The *Lykourgos* does not of course survey the development of Spartan history and it contains only brief reference to the long-term fate of Lykourgos' measures. His laws are said to have remained unchanged until the end of the Peloponnesian War when

gold and silver money first flowed into Sparta, and with money, greed and a desire for wealth prevailed through the agency of Lysander, who, though incorruptible himself, filled his country with the love of riches and with luxury...thus subverting the laws of Lykourgos (30 1).

Here problems of wealth take centre stage as the cause of Sparta's downfall, a viewpoint elaborated in the *Life of Lysander* (ch. 17) and in the *Life of Agis* (ch. 5), in which the supposed *rhētra* of Epitadeus about gift and bequest of land is added to the list of corrupting forces. In Plutarch's writings there are therefore two salient images: first, the notion that a distinctive set of attitudes to wealth formed a central determining feature of Spartiate society; second, the idea of an austere early Sparta whose citizens disdained riches and luxury until corrupted by the influx of imperial wealth at the end of the fifth century.

The account of Plutarch represents the culmination of centuries of invention of the Spartan mirage, an evolution of thought much influenced by the revolutions of the late third century. Yet several elements of that account are of earlier origin. In the *Lykourgos* (9 2) Plutarch himself cites Theophrastos for the comment that in Sparta wealth was 'an object of no desire' (fr. 78 Wehrli); and his account in the *Lysander* (17 2) of the Spartans' decision to admit, supposedly for the first time, the corrupting elements of coined silver and gold derives explicitly from Theopompos and Ephorus. By the end of the fourth century the two Plutarchean images of wealth referred to above were clearly in circulation; but, as we shall see, this situation represented a marked change from the position in the fifth century. The

Classical period itself was a crucial era in the growth of the *mirage of Spartiate attitudes to wealth*.

The aims of this essay are to examine the main contemporary developments during the Classical period in the image of the role of wealth in Spartan society, and to indicate (more briefly) some of the underlying reasons for these developments and the nature of the Spartans' own contribution to the process of image-production. My concern is not so much with the historical accuracy of the images under discussion as with their character and role as images. Nevertheless, clarification of the complex course and causes of the development of those images may be of service to historians wishing to dispel the illusions created by the *mirage spartiate* in order better to comprehend the socio-economic character of the Spartan state.

I

We must start, as in all Greek historiography, with Herodotus. What is remarkable about his picture of the role of wealth in Sparta is precisely how *unremarkable* it is. Herodotus dwells several times on remarkable features of Sparta: her transformation from disorder to good order (1 65), her dual kingship (6 56–9), and the willingness of her citizens to fight to the death in obedience to their *nomos* (7 101–5). A distinctive attitude to wealth and property is not among them. In so far as the subject does appear in passing, Sparta appears little different from other Greek states. It is a state in which gifts can be exchanged freely (6 62), whose citizens the Persian king Cyrus can accuse, along with all the other Greeks, of cheating in the marketplace (1 153), and whose soldiers receive distributions of booty equally with the rest of the Greek army (9 81).

It is true that Herodotus attaches more stories (eight in total) of potential, alleged and actual gift or receipt of bribes to Sparta than to any other Greek state; but five of these relate to the peculiar institution of the dual kingship about whose holders he

has many tales to tell.¹ Although he has fewer juicy stories to tell about leading men from other *poleis*, Herodotus makes it clear that they were no less susceptible to bribery than were Spartiates (e.g., 9 2, 41, 88). The fact that he could plausibly associate stories of bribery with Sparta is further confirmation that she was not viewed any differently from other Greek states with regard to the valuation and use of wealth. Only at one point is there a hint of a more austere image, at 9 82 where the Regent Pausanias contrasts a Spartan with a Persian meal, though even here there is no contrast with the rest of the Greeks; rather Spartan austerity is treated as representative of the poverty of Greece as a whole.

The image of wealth in Herodotus is not of course a pure outsider's view. He visited Sparta and picked up a good deal of gossip about past events and personalities. We can identify the high-ranking sources behind at least two of the bribery stories mentioned above (3 56: Archias, son of Samios; 5 51: Gorgo, daughter of King Kleomenes and wife of Leonidas). 'Herodotus' picture of Sparta...is thus in no small degree a self-portrait' (Tigerstedt 1965: 105), an indication perhaps of a greater sensitivity among the Spartiates themselves to the danger which illicit means of acquiring wealth posed for the stability of their society.

The marginality of issues of property and wealth to the dominant external image of Sparta is evident in a number of other late fifth- or early fourth-century writers, as is shown by other essays in this volume. As David Harvey makes clear, a pun on the infamously distasteful soup in the common messes (*Knights* 278–9) is the nearest Aristophanes gets to a reference to attitudes towards the material aspects of Spartiate life. William Poole's study of Euripides indicates how the playwright's references to luxury and extravagance were confined to Spartan women. Covetousness does appear among the list of accusations levelled at Spartan males by Andromache in her name play (451), but only after treachery, lies, guile, crooked thoughts and murder have all been wheeled out beforehand. Specific mention of Sparta's arrangements regarding wealth is absent from

Lysias' Olympic festival oration in 388 (33 7). The Spartans are justified as the legitimate leaders of Greece,

both by their inborn merits and by their warlike gifts, since they are the only ones whose country was never ravaged by war, who live unprotected by walls, who are free from internal unrest, who were never conquered and always had the same customs.

There is no hint here that a distinctive attitude to wealth was a significant factor.

In Thucydides we can detect the beginnings of a change. Like Herodotus, Thucydides describes a number of real or alleged incidents of bribery involving Spartiates (e.g., 1 109, 131; 2 21; 5 16; 8 83), but no more than those involving Athenians (e.g., 2 101; 3 11, 38–43; 4 65; 7 44, 46). Once again Sparta appears little different in this respect from other Greek states. But Thucydides' very first statement about Sparta in the *Archaialogia* (1 6) strikes a new and different note: 'it was the Spartans who first began to dress simply...with the rich leading a life that was as much as possible like the life of the ordinary people.'

Unfortunately, this perception that an attempt to minimize the daily impact of differences of wealth was a critical feature of the social system is never developed. Nowhere in any of the speeches in Books 1 and 2 which outline the merits or weaknesses of Spartan society is there a further reference to the subject. It is perhaps not surprising that it does not surface in the antithetical speeches made by the Corinthians and by King Archidamos in his defence of the Spartiate way of life (1 68–71, 80–5, esp. 84), since their prime concern was Sparta's *external* (in)activity. One might have expected at least a hint in the thinly-veiled comparison of the Athenian and Spartan ways of life in Perikles' funeral oration (2 35–46, esp. 37–40). Given, however, the emphasis the oration places on Athenian lack of extravagance and on the proper, unboastful use of wealth (40 1), it was doubtless difficult to construct a negative contrast out of Sparta's property arrangements. A more fundamental

reason for the neglect of issues of wealth is that in both Archidamos' and Perikles' speeches the central emphasis is on education and its capacity to provide a firm foundation for civic life (Hussey 1985: esp. 123–9). Since their divergent type of education was the determining factor behind the different character of Athenian and Spartan society, attitudes to wealth and property were necessarily secondary, and in the case of Sparta derivative upon the self-control (*sôphrosynê*) produced by her system of upbringing.

This perspective of Thucydides has been plausibly attributed by Hussey (1985) to the influence of Demokritean-type theories. Education as the key to virtue (*aretê*), and indeed to all social and political problems, was an essential tenet of much of the Sophistic movement of the later fifth century (cf. Kerferd 1981: chs 11–12). This was not of course true of all thinkers. Some, such as Phaleas of Chalkedon, held that the correct regulation of property ownership was the most important factor, since this was the source of all political strife (Arist. *Pol.* 1266a37–9). Even Phaleas, however, emphasized equality of education as a necessity in his proposed state (1266b31–3). As a consequence, writers on Sparta, such as Xenophon, who were influenced by sophistic (including Sokratic) thought tended to follow Thucydides in giving prior emphasis to her system of upbringing in the *agôgê* in explanations of Sparta's distinctive character.

II

Issues of property and wealth began, however, to receive a greater amount of comment from the end of the fifth century as part of a more general explosion of interest in all aspects of Spartan society among leading men in the rest of the Greek world, not least among the upper classes in Athens. The underlying reason for this phenomenon is well known, namely the threat which the Athenian democracy posed to their power and privilege (Ollier 1933: 164–8; Tigerstedt 1965: 153–6). A

growing interest in the Spartan alternative – itself fuelled by the polarization of Greece into two camps during the Peloponnesian War – was given expression through the intensified enquiry into the theory of society, leading to a number of treatises on state forms, which developed as part of the Sophistic movement patronized by disgruntled members of elite (Ollier 1933: 164–8, 206–14; Tigerstedt 1965: 153–6, 233–41).

The first known works on Sparta which issued from these developments are those of Kritias: two treatises entitled *Polity of the Lakedaimonians*, one in verse and one in prose. The surviving fragments include four references to Spartan austerity and moderation (Diels-Kranz 1959: 88B6, 7, 33, 34; translations in Sprague (ed.) 1972: 251–2, 262). Fragment 6 contrasts Spartan drinking habits in the common messes with those in Athens which, he claims, lead to drunkenness, loose talk, weak physique, undisciplined slaves and ruinous extravagance:

it is a habit and established practice at Sparta to drink from the same wine cup and not to give toasts mentioning someone by name and not to pass it round, as is customary in Athens, moving to the right in a circle around the company... Lakedaimonian youths, however, drink only enough to direct the thinking of all towards cheery hopefulness and the tongue towards friendliness and temperate laughter. This sort of drinking is beneficial to body and thought and property. And it is well suited to the works of Aphrodite and to sleep, haven from toils, and to Health, most delightful of the gods for mortals, and to Piety's neighbour, Moderation (*Sōphrosynē*)... The way of life of the Lakedaimonians is evenly ordered: to eat and drink the appropriate amount to render them capable of thought and labour. No day is set aside for soaking the body through immoderate draughts.

This picture is elaborated in fragment 33, according to which, in contrast to the practice in Chios, Athens and Thessaly, the Lakedaimonians drink each from his own cup and the wine-waiter pours in only as much as each wants to drink.

In the above fragments Kritias provides the first extant idealization of the Spartiates' use of material goods and the first explicit contrast with the practice of other states. One interesting aspect is the conflicting picture of cause and effect which is presented. Initially, Sparta's drinking parties are depicted as *leading* to the virtues of health and moderation among other benefits; later, however, they are simply the outward manifestation of the Spartan way of life. This general image of moderation is reinforced in fragment 7 in which Kritias attributes the saying 'Nothing in excess' to the Spartan sage Chilon. Finally, fragment 34 contains praise of the practical, utilitarian nature of certain Lakonian products – shoes, cloaks and a special drinking beaker – as appropriate to modest daily living. As Ollier (1933: 172 n. 4) notes, Kritias may have contrasted these items with the luxurious objects made elsewhere which are mentioned in fragments 2 and 35.

Our lack of anything approaching the complete text of Kritias' two Lakedaimonian polities has often been lamented, since it limits our appreciation not only of his contribution to the development of images of Spartan property arrangements, but also of the historiographical context of Xenophon's *Polity of the Lakedaimonians* where we stand on fuller but still somewhat slippery ground.² Like Kritias (fr. 88B32), Xenophon begins his treatise with the subject of procreation. He then moves on immediately (chs 2–4) to the upbringing. The importance he ascribes to the Spartan educational process is shown both by its early placing in his treatise and by his explicit comparison of the degree of obedience, respect and self-control which it produced in comparison with the upbringing of citizens in other Greek states.

Only subsequently, in Chapters 5–7, are we presented with the first sustained discussion of Spartan attitudes and practice towards the use of property. Note, however, that Xenophon's starting-point is not property itself but, in the vein of Herodotus and Kritias, the common meals. Moreover, the initial statement of their purpose is purely non-material in character: '[Lykourgos] established the public messes outside in the open, thinking

that this would reduce disregard of orders to a minimum' (5 2). When the discussion does move on to the material plane Xenophon starts with the moralizing theme of moderation which has been detected in earlier writers:

The amount of food he [sc. Lykourgos] allowed was just enough to prevent them getting either too much or too little to eat...the table is never bare until the company breaks up, and never extravagantly furnished (5 3);

and again,

What opportunity did these common messes give a man to ruin himself or his household by gluttony or drunkenness?

This kind of comment was to be repeated by Plutarch (*Lyk.* 10 1–2); but Plutarch, as we have seen, also went a step further in claiming that the messes rendered Ploutos unusable. Xenophon does not take this road. In his account rich men can deploy their greater landed resources by making additional donations of wheaten bread. (Less wealthy messmates would have little or no land spare for growing wheat, owing to the need to ensure their compulsory contributions of barley meal.) It is indeed these extra donations which, for Xenophon, sustain the happy mean between meagre and extravagant fare quoted above.

Chapter 6 introduces the practice of communal sharing. Once again the opening section is non-material in tone and content: Spartiate fathers share authority over one another's children 'because he wished the citizens to benefit from one another without doing any harm' (6 1–2). Xenophon then moves on to slaves (*oiketai*), hunting dogs, horses and caches of surplus food left by hunting parties (3–4). The common criterion behind the practice of sharing these items is that of *need*, and the nature of the sharing is limited by the extent of that need. A man can borrow other men's slaves in case of necessity. A man who falls ill or needs a carriage or has to get somewhere quickly may borrow another's horse; he uses it carefully and then duly restores it.

Those in need of food while out hunting take what they need, and leave the rest behind. Those who need hunting dogs (Xenophon has already informed us in Chapter 4 that Lykourgos had ordained that adult citizens should keep fit by hunting) invite the owner to join them in the hunt. Only if he is otherwise engaged do they get sole use of the dogs. The verb *deomai* (need) is used no fewer than six times in the above examples, making a seventh and final appearance in Xenophon's concluding judgment: 'The result of this method of sharing with one another is that even those who have but little receive a share of all that the country yields whenever they need anything.'

Some commentators, most notably Ollier (1934: 40–1), have queried Xenophon's account of these instances of sharing. The supposed common authority over children, was it not an exceptional rather than a routine matter? Was the right to use another's slave and horse not in reality simply a reflection of the close camaraderie and co-operation among soldiers? Has Xenophon or his informant generalized certain customs well beyond their original context, endowing them with a new moral purpose in terms of a response to need?

Even if one accepts the veracity of Xenophon's account of these customs, the extravagance of his concluding judgment is undeniable, as has been recognized by a number of scholars (e.g., Ollier 1934: 41–2; Moore 1975: 107–8). Less remarked has been the process through which it was achieved. A series of specific instances of sharing, all designed to meet particular needs, is transformed not simply into a statement about the overall character of Spartiate practice, but – further than that (in the implication that the needs of poor citizens were thereby satisfied) – into a judgment about the efficacy of such supposed general practice. One can speculate about the source of this transformation. Did Xenophon's informant(s), after recounting various examples, feel impelled to endow them with a grander significance, conscious perhaps of the growing inequalities among the Spartiate citizen body? Or is the extravagant conclusion Xenophon's own – a form of 'textualization of discourse'

whereby the highly context-specific instances of sharing provided by his informant(s) were fixed with a new meaning and a universal range of reference vastly different from the informant(s)' original intention?³ Whatever its source, the conclusion shows a remarkable (and contrived) naivety in its optimistic portrayal of the position of poor citizens; but it is notable that Xenophon is quite frank about the existence of differences of wealth. There is no trace of the supposed equality which appears in later writers; his argument is rather that inequalities in wealth simply did not matter.

This argument is developed in Chapter 7 in which Xenophon introduces the Lykourgan prohibition of *chrēmatismos*, the gaining of wealth through commercial or 'business' activity. In contrast to the previous chapter he commences with generalizations and then seeks to prove them: At Sparta Lykourgos forbade freemen to have anything to do with *chrēmatismos*. He insisted on their regarding as their own concern only those activities which make for civic freedom. The proof? Partly the lack of incentive to accumulate wealth; partly the disincentives against dishonest acquisition. On the one hand, equal contributions to the messes and an equal standard of living exclude the attraction of wealth to obtain luxury. Even cloaks require no expenditure, since adornment comes through one's bodily condition and physical work to help one's messmates is honoured over spending. (Note how these remarks prefigure the Plutarchean image of a 'Blind Ploutos'.) On the other hand, the legal system of currency is too bulky for secret storage and searches are made for illegal gold and silver with fines imposed on anyone detected in possession. The chapter concludes with a rhetorical question: why should Spartiates indulge in money-making when the pains of possession exceed the pleasure of using it?

The assertions in this last chapter are obviously essential to Xenophon's argument that inequalities in wealth do not matter. In his determination to make his case he selectively privileges certain pieces of information and marginalizes others. First of all, his chosen examples are illustrated in a most partial manner

which completely ignores the activities of his friend and patron King Agesilaos. It was Agesilaos who used to make a special gift of a cloak and an ox to new members of the *gerousia* (Plut. *Ages.* 4); and the supposed absence of spending on one's messmates has a hollow ring in the light of Xenophon's description of a king who thought that 'the generous man is required also to spend his own in the service of others' (Xen. *Ages.* 11 8; cf. 4). Moreover, the items of expenditure he cites hardly exhaust the range of activities for which Spartiates might want to acquire wealth. What, for example, about spending on one's womenfolk (cf. Arist. *Pol.* 1269b22–26; 1270a14–15)? What also of the expenses of chariot racing – a most striking omission given the efforts Agesilaos himself made to denigrate this favourite activity of the elite (Xen. *Ages.* 9 6)? And what of the costly dedications, sometimes commissioned from foreign artists, with which leading Spartiates commemorated their victories (Hodkinson 1989: 95–100)? Nor does Xenophon take account of the interest of citizens in enhancing their agrarian properties, such as Agesilaos' specialization in hounds and war horses (*Ages.* 9 6).

In its emphasis upon sharing and upon the absence and irrelevance of gainful activities the *Lak. Pol.* is our first surviving representative of certain important developments in the image of Spartan wealth. But there is also another significant image which appears for the first time in extended form in the much-debated Chapter 14 (15 in some editions) in which Xenophon inserts his criticisms of contemporary Sparta.⁴

If someone were to ask me whether I think that the laws of Lykourgos still remained unchanged, I could not confidently say yes. I know that formerly the Lakedaimonians preferred to live together at home with moderate possessions rather than expose themselves to the corrupting influences of flattery as harmosts of various cities. I know too that in former days they were afraid to be found in possession of gold; whereas nowadays there are some who even boast of its possession.

There may be room for debate as to whether these criticisms were intended as a reference to the situation in Sparta itself, as is normally thought, or only to the activities of harmosts outside Sparta, as Flower (1991: 91) has argued. The essential point is that the topics of wealth and material possessions now take centre stage when corruptions of the Spartan ideal are at issue in a way that they did not in accounts of the idealized Lykourgan system itself. The notion of a pristine Sparta polluted by the desire for wealth stands on the threshold of a long and influential history.

III

This last observation helps to explain developments in the image of Spartan wealth which occurred during the fourth century. For purposes of analysis we may identify three main types of image which reflect three distinct approaches to Sparta as a whole. First, there are those writers who, ignoring Sparta's contemporary decline, continued to stress the virtues of her traditional society. A second group of writers consists of those who expatiated on her moral decline from her former state of good order. Thirdly, there are those who viewed Sparta's corruption as deriving from inherent failings in her traditional *politeia*.

The main representatives of the first approach have been discussed by Fisher elsewhere in this volume (ch. X). The image of Sparta promulgated by late fourth-century Athenian admirers like Aeschines, Lykourgos and Phokion differs little from that of their late fifth-century predecessors. Primary emphasis is laid on her educational system and her discipline and *sōphrosynē*. In so far as material matters appear, it is with reference to Spartiate austerity, particularly with regard to the common messes, as in Phokion's rebuke to Demades quoted by Plutarch (*Phokion* 20 3): 'it would very well become you, with so strong a scent of ointment about you and wearing such a mantle, to recommend the messes (*philitia*) to the Athenians.'

The main known exponents of the second approach described above were Isokrates, Theopompos and, most of all, Ephorus. In their works, issues of wealth play a more central role. Of the three the tendency is least developed in the works of Isokrates. In those passages which speak favourably of Sparta the standard image of austerity typically receives mention among other virtues. In the *Archidamos* (59) the Spartans are said to possess good government, sober habits of life and willingness to fight to the death. The *Areopagitikos* (7) refers to their simple and warlike way of life; and there is a more generic reference to equality in the choice of officials, daily life and other institutions later in the same work (61).

When Isokrates writes of Sparta's decline, material factors are often mentioned. In the *Peace* (95–100) we are told that, as a consequence of their empire, Spartan citizens, abandoning their customs, surrendered themselves to unjust ways, laziness, lawlessness and greed; and the *polis* to contempt for its allies, covetousness of the possessions of other states and indifference to oaths and agreements. It is greed abroad rather than at home which is clearly in Isokrates' mind, as it is also in the *Panathenaios* (225): 'the Lakedaimonians always covet everything that belongs to others.' The further reference to greed in the *Busiris* (17) seems from the following context to refer to Spartiate relations with the helots rather than with one another. Isokrates' picture is akin therefore to the interpretation of Xenophon, *Lak. Pol.* 14 given by Flower, according to which the Spartiates' corruption by wealth was confined to their activities abroad. As in Xenophon's account, so too in a number of Isokrates' pronouncements, it is the misdeeds of her imperial rule which bring issues of wealth to the fore as a cause of her crisis. The only significant difference is that, writing at a greater chronological and empathetic distance, Isokrates is far more explicit about the extent of Sparta's international, and even internal, decline (e.g., *Peace* 95–104; *Areopagitikos* 7; *Philippos* 47–50; 60–1).

The works of Ephorus and Theopompos represent a clear

development from this position. Both authors are named by Plutarch as sources for his account (*Lyk.* 17) of the debate which took place in Sparta in 404 concerning what to do about the large amount of gold and silver coinage sent back by Lysander. According to Plutarch's account, it was decided to allow it into Sparta for public use but not for individual possession. His account implies that the acceptance of foreign coinage for public use was something new, a point he states directly in the passage from the *Life of Lykourgos* (30 1) quoted at the start of this essay. This seems to have been the view of Ephorus, as reflected in the derivative comments of Diodorus (7 12 8):

as they little by little began to relax each one of their institutions and to turn to luxury and idleness, and as they grew so corrupted as to use coined money and to amass wealth, they lost their leadership.

The ascription of this view to Ephorus is confirmed by a passage from Polybius (6 45) which, as we shall see below, was also drawn from his work. Writing of the pristine Lykourgan *politeia*, Polybius claims that one of its distinctive features was that,

concerning the acquisition of money (*peri tēn tou diaphorou ktēsin*), since it was quite discredited among the Spartans, it follows that any rivalry which might arise from the possession of more or less of it is completely eliminated from the constitution.

In the following chapter (ch. 46) he makes a similar but slightly more general claim, that 'Lykourgos, by eliminating the desire for wealth, eliminated at the same time civil discord and strife', a view which he attributes to a number of writers of whom Ephorus is cited by name. Unlike Plutarch and Diodorus, however, Polybius omits reference to Ephorus' complementary view that the introduction of coined money was Sparta's ruin since, as Lévy (1987 [1992]: 64–71) has recently demonstrated, in Book 6 he makes no allusion at all to the corruption of Spartan institutions, treating the Lykourgan regime as a '*politeia* théorique...

qu'il approuve sur un plan philosophique' (p. 69) without reference to historical reality.

On the question of its historicity, the implausibility of the notion that the Spartan *polis* possessed no foreign coinage before 404 has been emphasized by several recent studies (e.g., Cawkwell 1983: 396; Cartledge 1987: 88; Flower 1991: 92). There is even a strong case to be made that before 404 *individual* possession of gold and silver had also been permitted (Michell 1964: 298–303; MacDowell 1986: 119; Noethlichs 1987). Rather than the relaxation of control claimed by Ephorus, the compromise of 404 represented therefore either simply a reaffirmation of previous practice or possibly even the imposition of a new, more restrictive law.

Plutarch criticizes the compromise described above on the ground that the consequence of public use of currency was to stimulate private greed. Much of the lengthy sermon that accompanies this judgment is no doubt Plutarch's own, or possibly borrowed from Poseidonios (*apud* Athenaios 233f–234a = *FGrH* 87F48c; cf. Flower 1991: 93). Ephorus' judgment, as represented above by the quotation from Diodorus, does not lay all the blame for Sparta's decline on this simple decision. For him use of coined money was part of a more general trend towards luxury and idleness; but its part was significant in that it permitted the accumulation of wealth. The theme of corruption through money was evidently prominent in Ephorus' thought, since he is the probable source of the accounts in Diodorus (13 106 7–10) and Plutarch (*Lyk.* 16) of the peculation of Gylippos. Unlike Isokrates, Ephorus promulgates the view that this corruption affected not just Spartiates abroad but also Sparta's internal society. Whether Theopompos followed Ephorus completely in this regard is uncertain. The most directly relevant surviving fragment of his suggests a strong contrast between life inside and outside Sparta:

Archidamos deserted the traditional mode of life and was accustomed to live in a foreign and effeminate manner; he

was unable to endure the life at home, but on account of his incontinence he was eager always to live abroad (FGrH 115F232).

A further respect in which Ephorus appears as an innovator emerges from another portion of the aforementioned account of Polybius (6 45).

How could the most learned of the writers of earlier times – Ephorus, Xenophon, Kallisthenes and Plato – claim in the first place that it [sc. the constitution of Crete] was one and the same with that of the Lakedaimonians...? As to its dissimilarity, the distinctive features are said to be, first the land laws by which no citizen may own more than one another, but all must possess an equal share of the *politikē chōra*.

Although some scholars (e.g., David 1981: 69; 1982/83: 82 n. 52) have claimed the unanimity of all four of the writers mentioned above in favour of the notion of an equal distribution of land, it is clear both from parallel examples of his usage and from the testimony of Xenophon's and Plato's writings that it is the view of Ephorus alone which Polybius is reporting (Walbank 1957: 727; Hodkinson 1986: 381). The idea that equal landholdings were the prime distinctive feature of the Spartan *politeia* is a most striking innovation for which nothing in the surviving literature from the fifth century has prepared us.⁵

It is natural to enquire how Ephorus' views might have originated. Two possible sources present themselves. The first is the longstanding Greek tendency to explain military defeat in terms of moral weakness and decline. As Flower (1991: 93–4) has recently pointed out, just as the Ionian Greeks' defeat by Persia had been attributed to their laziness and luxury (cf. Hdt. 1 143; 5 69; 6 11–15; Thuc. 5 9; 6 77; 8 25), so too it was natural to explain Sparta's dramatic military decline through a similar corruption of her supposedly prior austerity. To link this corruption with her acquisition of imperial rule was an equally obvious step, since it was a further commonplace of Greek

thought that 'hard' peoples such as the Persians and Spartans invariably lost their original national characteristics by acquiring the wealth of the 'soft' peoples whom they had conquered (cf. Hdt. 9 122; Redfield 1985: 109–18; Austin 1993: 208–12).

In this way issues of wealth came to the forefront in connection with the need to explain Sparta's dramatic decline. Yet it still remains to be explained why, although several other writers invoked imperial corruption as the cause of her downfall, only in Ephorus do we get the specific assertions that the traditional Lykourgan *politeia* had enforced both a total ban on coinage and equality of landholding. Here we must consider a second source of Ephorus' account, one whose possibly significant influence on images of Spartiate wealth remains a tantalizing issue. I refer to the pamphlet concerning the laws of Lykourgos which the former Spartan king Pausanias is said to have written after he had been condemned to death and had fled into exile in the year 395. Our sole explicit testimony to the pamphlet's existence is in a sentence attributed to Ephorus himself by the geographer Strabo (8 5 5; 366c). Recent studies (e.g., Tigerstedt 1965: 110–11; David 1979) have argued convincingly that Pausanias' work was written in support of the traditional Lykourgan laws which he accused his political enemies at home of having violated. The work's influence upon subsequent writing about Sparta is strongly evident in the works of Plato and Aristotle, not least in the idea that the ephorate was a post-Lykourgan creation.

As Ephorus/Strabo tells us, Pausanias quoted the oracular responses given to Lykourgos by Delphi, and it is probable that he is the ultimate source of such basic 'documents' of Spartan history as the Great Rhētra (Plut. *Lyk.* 6) and various mythical Delphic oracles associated with the Spartan constitution (Parke and Wormell 1956: II nos. 216–22). One of these oracles is of particular relevance: 'lust for possessions (*philochrēmattia*) will destroy Sparta'. This saying was repeated not only by Aristotle (fr. 544 Rose) and other, later writers (refs in Parke and Wormell 1956: II no. 222), but also by Diodorus in the chapter clearly influenced by Ephorus (7 12 6).

Beyond this point resort has to be made to informed speculation; but it seems quite likely that Pausanias, who had been a longstanding opponent of Lysander whose death had caused his condemnation, would have made accusations that his imperialist policies had corrupted the Lykourgan system. Pausanias would have known of course that foreign coinage was in use in Sparta before the compromise of 404; but he might plausibly have said that Lykourgos had banned it altogether. It would be possible then, in the mind of an uncritical writer like Ephorus, for this to slide into the notion that the ban had remained in force until 404. (After all, was not Sparta's success due to the survival of Lykourgos' prescriptions?) Similarly, in the case of the supposed equality in landholding, faced with the obvious fact of severe and harmful inequalities which were probably increasing under the pressure of new socio-political developments resulting from foreign warfare (Hodkinson 1993), Pausanias may have claimed an original Lykourgan equality and railed against the deleterious effects of overseas involvement. Once again the way would then be open for this to slide later into the assumption (by Ephorus and/or Polybius) that this Lykourgan equality had been perpetuated until the time of empire when material corruption had set into the supposedly pristine social system.

IV

The third image of wealth referred to above is represented by the most serious fourth-century analysts of Spartan society, Plato and Aristotle. Despite many differences in the character and purpose of their respective works, they share a critical attitude towards both the tendency to eulogize Sparta and the approach which treated her fourth-century failings as the product of recent corruption.

In Book 8 of the *Republic* Plato describes four imperfect types of society and their corresponding types of individual. In the prologue to these descriptions he twice identifies his first type,

'timarchy' or 'timocracy', as corresponding to Spartan society (544c, 545a – in the former passage Crete is paired with Sparta). In his description of the compromise by which the timarchic society is created the very first feature picked out relates to material possessions, the allocation of land and horses to individual ownership (547b). In the list of timarchy's resemblances to the 'ideal society' (547d) respect for authority comes first, but abstention from agriculture, manual crafts and gainful activity are mentioned second, with the maintenance of common messes third. Moreover, in the following outline of timarchy's resemblance to oligarchy (548a–c) only one feature is mentioned: love of money (*chrēmata*):

There will be a fierce and secret passion for gold and silver, now that there are private strongrooms to hide it in, and now that there are the four walls of their private houses – expensive nests in which they can spend lavishly on their wives, and anything else they choose... They will also be mean about money, because though they love it they may not acquire it openly; but they will be ready enough to spend other people's money for their own satisfaction.

When Plato moves on to the timarchic individual (548d ff.), he mentions initially a list of non-material characteristics; but then at 549b he returns to wealth: 'when he is young...he will despise money, but the older he grows the keener he will get about it. His nature has a touch of avarice (*philochrēmata*).'

Two essential points emerge from the above account. First of all, Plato gives the nature of property ownership and attitudes to wealth a remarkably high profile in defining the overall character of his Spartan-based timarchy. Secondly, his comments on property and wealth express the very essence of a timarchic regime. Contrary to what is sometimes asserted, they do not relate to a state of corruption to be associated with Sparta's fourth-century decline as distinct from the Sparta of an earlier period. For Plato individual property ownership, abstention from agriculture, manual crafts and gainful activity, and the

vices of avarice and the secret love of money are all part and parcel of the successful, traditional Sparta whose eminence qualified it for attention as one of the major alternative models of the Greek *polis*. Plato's description of decline begins only after this point, at 550d–551b when he discusses how oligarchy originates from timarchy. The accumulation of personal wealth leads to extravagance, citizens and their wives stretch and disobey the law, and envious spying and rivalry ensue. Wealth eclipses *aretē* as the determinant of status, prestige and office are reserved for the rich, and the poor are despised. Finally, a property qualification for office is established through armed force, if terror will not work. I have suggested elsewhere (Hodkinson 1989: 100) that, with the exception of the final stage, the basic outline of these developments has its affinities to Sparta's historical development in the late fifth and early fourth centuries. In so far as there is a reflection of contemporary Sparta, the key point is that the decline of timarchy results from the development of inherent weaknesses in its essential character, rather than from exogenous factors such as the influx of foreign wealth or abrupt changes of direction in policy or law. There is therefore some plausibility in the claim of Tigerstedt (1965: 266) that Plato's description of Sparta in the *Republic* is a polemic against uncritical admirers who vaunted Sparta's traditional *eunomia* and treated her fourth-century crisis as a corruption of a previously perfect *polis*.

Not surprisingly, the *Laws* presents some different emphases. Since Plato's concern was to construct an entire *politeia* for his imagined Cretan colony of Magnesia, he dwells on matters of property as one item among many. The discussions of Morrow (1960) and of Powell (in this volume) have indicated the extent of Spartan references, both positive and negative, in the work. Although a number relate to issues of wealth, it is her educational system (Books 1–2) and her balanced constitution (Book 3) which take pride of place. It has been claimed (Morrow 1960: 107–8) that Sparta was (or had been) a living example of the most important of Plato's proposals in the field of land-ownership; but this view is based upon a misconception of

Spartiate land tenure (on which, see Hodkinson 1986). The equal allocation of land designated by Plato was never in force in historical Sparta, nor is there any evidence that Plato thought it ever had been;⁶ it is rather a reflection of common colonial practice. Moreover, Magnesia's system of 'single heir' inheritance (745b; 923c) never existed in Classical Sparta outside the retrospective fictional account in Plutarch, *Agis* 5 (Schütrumpf 1987); the *historical* Spartiates practised *partible* inheritance. The laws regulating the economic activities of citizens, such as the prohibition of participation in handicrafts and trade, seem to have more of a Spartan ring about them; but the prohibition of private possession of gold and silver (742a–b) is, as we have seen, a more problematic issue, and it is unlikely that Plato intended that the Magnesians should employ Sparta's bulky iron currency (Morrow 1960: 140)!

More explicit references to Spartiate practice regarding wealth are few and somewhat mixed. The austere life of Spartiate youths is briefly recounted with approbation – in fourth place out of a list of beneficial Spartan institutions (633b–c). In a passage (696a), quoted in Powell's essay in this volume (p. 296) Sparta is given credit for the fact that poverty and wealth are honoured and educated the same. The passage is placed in Plato's account of the failings of the Persian empire (693d–698a). Powell's suggestion that it bears a purely pre-adult reference is part of his more general argument that the Persian story is intended as a thinly-veiled allegory of the decline of Sparta. After telling how the luxurious female-dominated education of the later Persian kings came to replace the tough, simple upbringing of their predecessors, Plato's account then turns into a dialogue in which the Athenian speaker expatiates to his Spartan interlocutor on the harm which results when wealth is promoted above other criteria of honour. If Powell's interpretation is correct, Plato here moves closer than anywhere else in his writings to the moralizing view that the Spartan system was ruined by imperial success. Certainly, such a progression is absent from his image of Spartan women, for

their luxury, extravagance and disorderliness are treated as a longstanding phenomenon deriving from the failure of the lawgiver to extend to them the control established over the men (806c; cf. 637c).

The *Laws*' remarks on the women are repeated almost exactly by Aristotle in his *Politics* (1269b12–1270a14) whose account in Book 2, Chapter 9 is the most full-blooded assault on the Spartan legend, a conscious polemic against the arguments of contemporary Lakonizers. His criticisms of the women follow immediately after his opening salvo against the system of helotage and in them he draws even more explicit attention than Plato to the connection with issues of wealth. The lawgiver, he says, has been negligent in failing to control the women, who

live intemperately, enjoying every licence and indulging in every luxury. An inevitable result under such a constitution is that esteem is given to wealth, particularly in cases where the men are dominated by the women; and this is a common state of affairs in military and warlike races...this is why that state of affairs prevailed among the Lakonians, where in the days of their empire a great deal was managed by women... If...the position of women is wrong, not only does it look like a blot on the constitution in itself, but it seems to contribute something to the greed for money (1269b21–32; 1270a11–14).

From here Aristotle moves on directly to criticize the unequal distribution of property which he ascribes to errors in the laws:

for the lawgiver, while he quite rightly made it a disgrace to buy and sell land in someone's possession, left it open to anyone to transfer it to other ownership by gift and bequest – and yet this inevitably leads to the same result.

Moreover, about two-fifths of the land is possessed by women because heiresses are numerous and dowries are large. Again, the fault lies with the laws (or lack of them):

It would have been better to have regulated dowries,

prohibiting them altogether or making them small or at any rate moderate in size. But, as it is, if a man dies intestate, the person he leaves as *klēronomos* gives her to whomsoever he likes.

Consequently, although the land could have supported a greater number of citizens, the number fell to below 1,000 [i.e. after the battle of Leuktra] and Sparta succumbed owing to her shortage of men.

Further criticisms pertaining to property and wealth appear thick and fast later in the same chapter. Because the ephorate is open to all citizens, the poverty of many holders of the office lays them open to bribery (1270b8–13). The other Spartiates have so high a degree of austerity in their daily lives that they cannot endure it and secretly break the law (1270b33–5). The Elders also ‘conduct much business by taking bribes and showing favouritism’, since their affairs are exempt from scrutiny (1271a3–5). The rules made by the person who established the common messes are unsatisfactory and lead to the opposite of what the lawgiver intended. Poor men are unable to make their contributions and join in the messes, yet the established regulation is that those who cannot pay it are excluded from citizenship (1271a26–37). Finally, public finance is badly handled. There is never any money in the treasury and the Spartiates are bad at paying their property taxes (*eisphorai*). Since they own most of the land themselves, they do not scrutinize one another’s contributions (1271b10–15). This last comment leads Aristotle to conclude the chapter with a final ringing condemnation:

and so a state of affairs has come about which is just the opposite of the happy conditions envisaged by the lawgiver: he has produced a state which has no money but is full of persons eager to make money for themselves (1271b15–17).

Two main points emerge from this account. First, issues of property and wealth are central to Aristotle’s perception of the failings of the Spartan *politeia* and the causes of its crisis in the early fourth century. Comparable issues do not, however,

appear in those parts of the *Politics* which focus on meritorious aspects of Spartan society – with the sole exception of 1263a35–7, in which Aristotle provides a compressed and somewhat distorted summary of the information in Xenophon, *Lak. Pol.* (quoted above) about the sharing of property as an example of the practicability of communal use in well-run states. This instance apart, Aristotle's picture of Sparta is of a society dominated by a concern to amass wealth, an image comparable with the more schematic account in Plato's *Republic*. Moreover, in Aristotle's account the luxury of Spartan women is no longer, as in Euripides, an isolated phenomenon, but one with direct implications for the ambitions of Spartiate men who, under pressure from their wives, partake of the same apple of greed for wealth in spite of their more austere upbringing.

Secondly, Aristotle's criticisms are directed at long-established characteristics of the Spartan *politeia* and at mistakes of its lawgiver who was responsible for the deleterious property arrangements and attitudes to wealth. This is not the place to repeat the demonstrations of Schütrumpf (1987) and myself (1986: 389–91) that even the rights of gift and bequest, which some scholars have thought to be the work of Epitadeus in the early fourth century, were in Aristotle's judgment archaic features of the property system. As Schütrumpf argues elsewhere in this volume, Aristotle's criticisms are not directed at new corruptions only recently introduced since the end of the Peloponnesian war. Even where his remarks refer to current practice (such as the bribery of ephors and Elders) or recent consequences (such as the full-blown development of manpower shortage or the female management of affairs during the period of empire), these are always traced back to the errors of the lawgiver whose provisions or omissions led to the effects described.

V

In the long run, as we know from the account of Plutarch, the

critiques of Plato and Aristotle were unable to stem the tide of idealizing and moralizing interpretations. Their transient legacy is evident already in the works of their immediate disciples and successors within the Academy and the Peripatos. Probably deriving from the Old Academy, perhaps towards the end of the fourth century (Tigerstedt 1965: 277), is the pseudo-Platonic dialogue *Alkibiades I*. It is true that its depiction of the presence of wealth is not too dissimilar to that of Plato. (The dramatic date is the later fifth century during the youth of Alkibiades.) The private possession of wealth is presented as a distinctive feature of Spartan life. Spartiates have more land, slaves and livestock than any Athenian; and certain individuals have more gold and silver in their possession than in all the rest of Greece, since these have poured into their territory for many generations. What is different, however, is the absence of any notion of *clandestine* enjoyment of a forbidden fruit. Wealth is presented as an additional boon to the Spartiates' noble ancestry and other excellences which together put Alkibiades' imagined superiority in the shade. Wealth here appears alongside, *inter alia*, moderation (*sōphrosynē*), discipline, courage and endurance. These are strange bedfellows when viewed from the angle of both the moralizing and the philosophic approaches to Spartan wealth of the previous century. The resulting picture seems almost to have come full circle to the Herodotean image of an outstanding but in most respects typical Greek *polis*.

With the Peripatetic writers we face the same problem as with Kritias. The likelihood is that their influence on subsequent images of Spartan wealth was considerable, but the fragmentary preservation of their works leaves us the most meagre of clues with which to prove our suspicions. The problem of incomplete survival impedes, first of all, an attempt to determine the relationship between the image of property arrangements in the *Politics* and that in the Aristotelian treatise, *Polity of the Lakedaimonians*. It seems that the latter work was completed after Book 2 of the *Politics* (Keaney 1980; Schütrumpf 1991: 296–7). Given the seemingly collaborative nature of the treatise, as part of the

overall research project into the constitutions of Greek states organized by Aristotle but largely (if not wholly) carried out by his disciples, it may stand in many respects as a work of transition between Aristotle and his Peripatetic successors. I have argued elsewhere (Hodkinson 1986: 388) concerning the important issue of the sale of land that, although there is no contradiction of substance between the *Politics* and the *Polity*, there is a divergence of presentation which is attributable to the difference between a compressed analytical critique and a collection of information. The wider range of details which the *Polity* aimed to include has an effect upon its image of property arrangements. So, for example, one of its surviving fragments (Arist. fr. 13 Rose = Diltz 1971 no. 13) dutifully records several items passed over in the *Politics*, such as the prohibitions on female ornamentation, the restrictions on food for the boys, the modest and uniform burials, and diet of barley meal instead of wheat. The image implied by such an uncritical listing is necessarily one of straightforward austerity; whereas, as was seen above, the *Politics* depicts the Spartiates' austere life as too hard for them to live up to.

Plutarch, we know, utilized the *Polity* in his life of Lykourgos and it is likely that the work contributed to his idealized image of the role of wealth. There is, however, good reason to think that much of Plutarch's detailed information about Spartan institutions may also have come from other Peripatetic sources, such as Dikaiarchos and Theophrastos, whom he is known to have used (Aalders 1982: 64). Certain similarities between the Plutarchean and Peripatetic attitudes to Sparta would be compatible with this hypothesis. The Peripatetics seem generally to have taken a pro-Spartan stance, deriving from their hostility to Athenian democracy, which contrasted sharply with the balanced approach of Aristotle (Tigerstedt 1965: 304–9). Of Dikaiarchos we are told that his treatise on the Spartan *politeia* so pleased the Spartans that they had it recited annually to their youths;⁷ but its line on matters of wealth and property is unknown. With Theophrastos we are on slightly more promising ground. One of Plutarch's

works, his *Praecepta gerendae rei publicae*, seems to have been influenced by Theophrastos' *Politika pros tous kairous* (Aalders 1982: 64, with refs to earlier work), and it seems likely that his views on Sparta also owed much to the relevant parts of the latter's large work in 24 books on the laws of different peoples. Theophrastos' moralizing interests are shown (*apud* Plut. *Ages.* 36) by his inclusion of the episode in which King Agesilaos in Egypt declined the gifts of sweetmeats in favour of more ordinary fare. It is tempting therefore to interpret Plutarch's citation of his remark (mentioned at the start of this essay) that wealth was 'an object of no desire' as an indication that the essence, if not the details, of the later idealized image of Spartiate attitudes to property was already current in the early years of the Hellenistic period.

VI

The aim of the above survey has been a limited one: to examine, with a more specific and detailed focus than has been hitherto attempted, contemporary perceptions of the role of wealth in fifth- and fourth-century Sparta, with a view to understanding the roots of one important aspect of the later, fully-blown *mirage spartiate*. Although my interpretations of particular writers may differ in detail from those of earlier studies, the resulting overall picture conforms in large measure to the long-term rhythms of development suggested in the more wide-ranging studies of Ollier and Tigerstedt. The image of Sparta as a state with distinctive and radically different attitudes to and arrangements regarding material possessions, largely undeveloped for most of the fifth century, emerged under the combined influences of upper-class disenchantment with democratic Athens, the polarization effected by the Peloponnesian War and the upsurge of philosophic enquiry into the nature of the ideal society. It was further stimulated in the fourth century by Sparta's internal crisis and international decline, along with the leakage of

'information' about the laws of Lykourgos in the pamphlet of Pausanias. Moralizing explanations of these events contrasted a corrupt contemporary Sparta with an idealized past society whose success had been founded upon the suppression of the influence of wealth for the political good of the *polis*. Plato and Aristotle attempted to debunk such interpretations, portraying Sparta's property arrangements as flawed from the start; but the powerful attraction of the mirage of a pure and pristine society unsullied until comparatively late on by the claims of Mammon proved irresistible. In this way the Spartiates were transformed in Greek thought into something akin to the Noble Savages of early antiquity, the archetypal Others whose admirable virtues were strange and inimitable within the context of contemporary civilized society.

Yet, although the production of the images of Spartan wealth discussed in this essay was largely the work of outsiders, it was not altogether so. It is appropriate to conclude this study by examining briefly the contribution of the Spartiates themselves. Thucydides (5 68) remarked on the secrecy of Spartans about their army numbers; but such secrecy did not extend to all areas of Spartiate life, nor to all foreign enquirers. Nor, as Powell (1989) has reminded us in his work on Spartan mendacity, did secrecy regarding the true state of affairs necessarily imply a total withholding of information; inquisitive visitors might be told or allowed to see precisely what it was expedient for them to know.

We should distinguish, moreover, between different sources of information. The ephors, acting in their official capacity, might keep their lips sealed; but many leading Spartiates were on cordial terms of *xenia* (ritualized friendship) with their peers from other states. Herman (1987: esp. 143–50) has demonstrated how, even among the Spartiates, the obligations of ties of *xenia* might assume priority over strict adherence to the interests of one's *polis*. Much material pertaining to our theme must have emerged in sociable conversation between leading Spartiates and their foreign friends on occasions of hospitality both in

Sparta and abroad. Thus, for example, Herodotus was treated to scandalous tales of the pecuniary misdeeds of former kings; Xenophon was provided with the 'information' – and perhaps a fair deal of the commentary – which surfaces in his *Lak. Pol.*; and the Aristotelian school could even acquire knowledge of the rules of Spartiate land tenure and the proportion of land in female hands.

In certain cases we can detect, or at least suspect, a direct attempt to influence the image, both at home and abroad. The pamphlet of Pausanias is the most blatant, but not the only, example. It is hard to believe that Xenophon's remarks do not owe a lot to the thinking of his patron Agesilaos. I have commented already on the way in which the latter's deployment of wealth is conspicuously ignored by his client; but Agesilaos' influence was probably also more positive. Throughout his reign he conducted a campaign in favour of a 'traditional' austere lifestyle and against extravagant display as part of his consolidation of a secure home power base in contrast to the independent foreign sphere of influence exploited by some of Sparta's nauarchs and harmosts (cf. esp. *Xen. Ages.* 5 1–3; 8 6–8; 9 1–6; 11 7, 11). It is not surprising that these virtues are precisely the ones which Xenophon emphasizes and that his criticisms focus on the misconduct of Spartiates *abroad*.

Was the influence which Pausanias and Agesilaos exerted upon the development of contemporary perceptions exceptional, or should we see them as part of a more general process whereby the Spartiates contributed to their own mirage? Here it is necessary to risk a certain amount of informed speculation; but the resulting picture will, I hope, retain an inherent plausibility. As Ollier (1933: 100–8) has noted, the Spartiates will long have possessed a high degree of pride in their *polis* and its way of life, feelings reinforced by daily repetition in the *agōgē* and messes. The polarization of the Greek world in the fifth century is likely to have developed more strongly their sense that their way of life was markedly different from practices elsewhere. Increasing Athenian hostility and criticism, no doubt vividly

reported to them by foreign admirers, will have intensified Spartiate feelings of loyalty to their 'traditional' values and practices whose original character will have become overstated and exaggerated in their defence.⁸ This process may have been aided by the comments of foreign Lakonophiles whose hatred of democratic Athens must often have led them into hyperbole and over-drawn contrasts between the opposing sets of principles. The general impression in the Greek world that the Athenian phenomenon was something different and new is likely to have made Spartan archaism more pronounced; as also will conservative reactions within Sparta to her own disturbingly unprecedented involvement in protracted overseas warfare and empire. We can posit, in short, a self-sustaining cycle whereby perceptions of the distinctive character of her property arrangements developed, both consciously and unconsciously, within Sparta, with a consequent impact on the rhetoric designed for both internal and external consumption.

This picture has the merit of placing men like Pausanias and Agesilaos within the context of a more wide-ranging process rather than treating their attitudes as stemming merely from individual circumstances. It also leads us to suggest that even the increasingly dominant explanations of Sparta's crisis, which portrayed her fourth-century arrangements as the corruption of an original ideal, might not have been completely unacceptable to contemporary Spartiates. As Redfield (1977/78: 147) has pointed out, the general tendency of Spartan, as of all Greek, thought will have been to conceive the progress of their history in terms of decline from an original perfection, a phenomenon aided in Sparta by the supervisory, censorial role given to the old men (Plut. *Lyk.* 25 1–2). Living under the shadow of a lost greatness, late-fourth-century Spartiates had to adopt *some* explanation of their fall from power; and one which, although critical of Sparta, ascribed much of the blame to a transient, past period of imperial expansion was perhaps not intolerable. Spartiate complicity in such an explanation would help to explain both its long-term success and its adoption later by the mid

third-century reformers, who elaborated it through the invention of Epitadeus into a fully comprehensive justification for their revolutionary changes.

This interpretation would also accord with the striking fact (remarked on by Powell) that Plato, in his *Laws*, appears to be writing in the hope that the Spartiates would accept *his* criticisms and advice concerning their *politeia*. Did the unphilosophic Spartiates really take notice of such literary works as those discussed in this essay? Plato is not the only source for such a belief. The Spartans' use of Dikaiarchos' treatise has already been mentioned, although there is uncertainty about the date at which this took place. As Gray points out (this volume), Xenophon's association with Sparta surely involved the reception of his literary works there, especially his encomium of Agesilaos. Several of Isokrates' works presuppose *inter alios* a Spartan audience; and the epilogue to Isokrates' *Panathenaikos* seems to provide more details.

The Spartan sympathizer suggests that the work would be shown to the Lakedaimonians and that he would be able to explain its meaning for them. He acknowledges that most Spartans would pay no attention to anything written in Athens:

yet the most intelligent among them, who possess and admire certain of your writings, will not misapprehend anything of what is said in this discourse if they can find someone who will read it to them, and if they can take the time to ponder over it by themselves (251).⁹

Later he adds that by recounting the Spartans' achievements Isokrates had

brought it about that many [of the Spartiates] long to read and peruse your accounts of them...because they wish to hear how you have dealt with them. And as they think and dwell upon those deeds, they will not fail to recall also those ancient exploits through which you have glorified their ancestors, but will often talk about them amongst themselves (252–3).

Are these remarks just self-flattery and wishful thinking or even merely a rhetorical exercise? Or is there any substance to the scenarios conjured up by the sympathizer? Notwithstanding the rhetorical context of the epilogue, my inclination is to take it on several grounds as at least an approximation to the truth. First, it seems entirely plausible that Spartiate officials who took pains to present a beneficial image of Sparta to the outside world would take an interest in the effectiveness of their image-building as evidenced by the works of leading foreign writers. Secondly, it is clear that the Spartiates, brought up as individuals to rely constantly not upon their own judgment but upon the guidance of others, were also collectively, for all their fierce pride, remarkably responsive to the opinions of outsiders, even to foreign ambassadors on matters of policy (Hodkinson 1983). Thirdly, in view of the known social interactions between the Spartan and other elites, it seems likely that there would indeed be foreign Lakonizers who were keen to communicate and interpret such works to their Spartiate friends.

Finally, we should not underestimate the Spartans' desire for self-gratification upon which Isokrates touches. He emphasizes their interest in great deeds of the past, and the same message emerges from the account in Plato's *Hippias Major* (284c–286a; whether genuinely Platonic or not) in which the sophist Hippias says that during his visit to Sparta his stories of city foundations and genealogies were well received. But the fact that Hippias was also permitted to discourse upon the subject of the education of the young indicates the Spartiates' interest in pertinent social issues, no doubt especially if the Spartan system was presented in a favourable light. Ollier (1933: 112–13) expresses this last point well:

La cité de Lycurge n'était pas, en effet, si fermée ni si dédaigneuse qu'elle ne prêtât volontiers l'oreille aux loges dont elle était l'objet. Elle n'ignorait pas ce que les aristocrates et les philosophes pensaient d'elle, à Athènes ou ailleurs. Ces discours ou ces traités philosophiques pour lesquels les

Spartiates manifestaient ordinairement tant de mépris trouvaient tout de même grâce devant eux lorsqu'ils étaient consacrés à la louange de leur cité.

Ollier here suggests an important point about the influence which the very existence of a potential Spartiate audience might have had on the development of images of her property system. The course of that development may owe not a little to the requirement that writers who wanted to gain more than the most cursory hearing at Sparta had to make at least some concessions to what their potential listeners wanted to hear. Even Plato tries to make his criticisms acceptable through the device of the Spartan interlocutor. If it is the case that moralizing accounts which wrote of Sparta's fourth-century corruption tended deliberately to counterbalance their criticism with fulsome praise of the virtues of the original Lykourgan property system in order to make their works less unpalatable to a Lakonian audience, that would further explain the extraordinary growth and tenacity of this striking aspect of the Spartan mirage.

This brief enquiry into the Spartan role in the production of images of the role of wealth suggests a complex chain of interactions between a number of factors of which only a few have been touched upon here: Spartan reality; Spartiate self-perceptions, both private and official; the rhetorical communication of those perceptions to sympathetic outsiders; the status of such sympathizers and the varied reception of their messages in their native states; the diverse agendas and literary genres of foreign writers; the existence of both Spartan and non-Spartan audiences for their works; and the role of leading Lakonophiles in mediating those works to their Spartiate friends. It was through the tangled web of such political, social and personal interactions that the image of a Spartiate 'Blind Ploutos' came to develop. It was an image indelibly stamped with the mark of contemporary Greek society.

Notes

- 1 Hdt. 5 51; 6 50, 66, 72, 82; those involving other Spartiates are 3 56, 148; 8 5.
- 2 This slipperiness is increased, as Momigliano (1936: 171) has pointed out, by the fact that the ambiguous present tense used throughout the work may refer at different points to a past situation or to an ideal state of affairs as well as to the actual present. I accept the standard attribution of the work to Xenophon, although much of what I say below would apply even if this were mistaken.
- 3 My approach here draws inspiration from Lata Mani's study of the production of colonial 'knowledge' concerning the practice of Sati in nineteenth-century Bengal (Mani 1985: esp. 118–22), which utilizes the work of P. Ricoeur (1971).
- 4 Whether this chapter is a postscript added later in the light of Sparta's decline and to what date it (and indeed the rest of the treatise) should be ascribed are questions which lie beyond the scope of this essay.
- 5 One qualification needs to be entered. Polybius' account may seem to imply that the land laws implementing equality of holdings actually remained in force into the Classical period; but, as Cozzoli (1979: 21) has pointed out, there is no certainty that this was Ephorus' view. The seeming longevity of landed equality is a product of the purely theoretical nature of Polybius' analysis of the Lykourgan regime; he provides no indication at all of Ephorus' views of the development of the Spartan *politeia*.
- 6 The equal distribution to which Plato refers at 684d–685a applies to the period of the original Dorian conquest of Argos, Lakonia and Messenia and has no bearing on historical Sparta. MacDowell's claim (1986: 89) that when Plato says that of the three only Sparta persisted with the arrangement, 'this appears to imply that equality of landholdings in Sparta still obtained in Plato's time' is a mistaken interpretation of both Plato's meaning and Spartan reality.

- 7 Suda, s.v. *Dikaiarchos* = fr. 1 Wehrli. The date of the original source of this information is unknown. Tigerstedt (1965: 586 n. 651) suggests that it pertains to the archaizing Sparta of the Roman Imperial period rather than to the decadent Sparta of *Dikaiarchos*' own time, as Chrimes (1949: 7) has proposed. It is not so certain that early Hellenistic Sparta was so uniformly neglectful of its traditional *politeia* as Tigerstedt supposes; but, even if his argument is correct, it still marks the work out as eulogizing in character.
- 8 Cf., as Ollier (1933: 110–12) observes, the tone of King Archidamos' speech in Thuc. 1 84–5.
- 9 I here follow the translation of *ton anagnōsomenon* by Harris (1989: 112 n. 209), who argues against Boring's view (1979: 45–6) that it refers to someone who will *explain* the speech. The Spartiates' access to the written word through such intermediaries means that their limited level of literacy – on this controversial subject, see Cartledge (1978) and the works of Boring and Harris (112–14) cited above – need not have been a barrier to their influence as an audience upon the development of the Spartan mirage in literary works. As Harris remarks (p. 34), the use of intermediaries 'was a commonplace occurrence among Greeks and Romans, as indeed in many other societies with low levels of literacy,' We should not forget the potential role of the *perioikoi* who mingled with Spartan citizens in many contexts of daily life and acted as intermediaries between Sparta and the outside world in other spheres. Although some of them may have participated in part of the Spartiate upbringing, their cultural horizons need not generally have been as limited as those of the average Spartan.

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VII

IMAGES OF SPARTA: WRITER AND AUDIENCE IN ISOCRATES' *PANATHENAICUS*

Vivienne Gray

Introduction

Isocrates presents various 'images' of Sparta in the *Panathenaicus*. They include his own apparently critical view and the opposition to his view, particularly the opposition of one of his pupils, who is described as a panegyrist of Sparta. The aim of this paper is to interpret the speech through the decoding of its rhetoric, thus permitting a correct assessment of the evidence it offers about the image of Sparta.

The interpretation of the *Panathenaicus* is a matter of controversy for which some hold Isocrates himself responsible.¹ The speech consists of prologue (1–38), main argument (39–198), epilogue (199–270) and conclusion (271–2). The prologue discusses the misinterpretation of the speaker and his works (5 ff.). The main argument then follows. Isocrates says he wrote the speech in order to praise Athens for her past services to Greece (35–8). He intended to confirm the justice and truth of his praise by contrasting her record with that of Sparta (39–41). He carries out this intention over sections 42–198, or so it seems, contrasting Athens as a relatively mild power doing good for others against Sparta, a brutal power doing good for herself alone. Sections 53–8 are typical of his approach. During the development of this main argument (176) Isocrates says he will end with the achievements of Athens in war; but when he

reaches that point (198), he begins the long epilogue (200–70) which he says describes events that compelled him to continue (199). These had occurred when various groups of his pupils read through the draft of sections 1–198 with him, and they take the form of the reactions of the pupils to the speech, particularly the reaction of one who was inclined to praise the Spartans and who, though he liked the praise of Athens, disliked the criticism of Sparta. This ‘sympathizer’ met with complete humiliation when he tried to say something in independent praise of Sparta (201–28); but when Isocrates showed signs of regretting the violence of his criticism (229–33), he took the quite different line that Isocrates’ critique could be read as praise or as blame depending on the sympathies of the audience. He said that Isocrates had designed the main argument to permit both readings and he gave his own reading of the speech as praise of Sparta.

The epilogue therefore, or more precisely the sympathizer Isocrates introduces into the epilogue, challenges the intention Isocrates himself announced at 39–41 and provokes a controversy about the meaning of the whole speech. Did Isocrates agree with him? The pupil has no natural authority over his former teacher, but Isocrates responds to his reading of his intention in a rather interesting way. He praises him for his nature and training but does not tell him whether his reading was right or wrong. He says he let him remain ‘as he had disposed himself’, in his own pro-Spartan sympathy (265). This is no straight endorsement, but Isocrates must have some reason for letting his pupil speak, and some take his refusal to confirm or deny his pupil’s reading as a sign that he accepted it and wrote the epilogue to indicate that he admitted the authority of other readings apart from his own. Some scholars suggest that he perhaps even wrote the main argument with this already in his mind, incredible though it may seem in the light of the clear statement of intent at 39–41. This would mean that Isocrates ultimately agreed that the writer’s intention could be differently interpreted by different audiences, and that these different interpretations were equally valid.

Kennedy's recent paper 'Ancient antecedents of modern literary theory'² reads the epilogue this way. It argues that ancient literary criticism recognized and rejected what modern theory calls the 'fallacy' of authorial intent'. This fallacy held that the author defined the meaning of his work. The truth was that audiences defined their own meanings according to their own inclinations. The criterion was 'reader-reception' rather than authorial intent. The fallacy was 'largely a creation of rhetoric with its love of the power of the speaker', but the epilogue to Isocrates' highly rhetorical *Panathenaicus* 233–65 is offered as evidence that even rhetoricians recognized the fallacy of authorial intent and the authority of 'reader-reception'.

The epilogue does indicate that Isocrates could conceive of a theory of meaning based on 'reader-reception' rather than 'authorial intent', but even this needs some qualification. The theory he has the pupil develop is not the audience free-for-all it seems, for he has him imply a hierarchy of audiences imposing a hierarchy of interpretations. The sympathizer says that only the cultivated few will read the speech as praise of Sparta, as if those who read it as criticism are the uncultivated many in Athens (261). Not all audiences are of equal worth in their readings.

The question also remains whether Isocrates does validate even this hierarchical version of the 'reader-reception' theory, for it runs counter to his declared intention (39–41) and there is the possibility that he has introduced the sympathizer as a straw man for burning. If he does validate it, there would be wide implications for the understanding of ancient rhetoric. The sympathizer's recognition of the role of the audience in interpreting the text in different ways shows that ancient rhetoric was grappling with matters of interest to modern literary critics and theorists. Ancient rhetorical theory of course recognized the importance of the audience, the necessary preliminary to the criterion of 'reader-reception'. Yet extant fourth century theory never suggested that the audience was at liberty to interpret the text according to their inclination. It was rather the task of the speaker to manipulate them into acceptance of his own

meaning, what Kennedy's paper calls 'rhetoric with its love of the power of the speaker'. Aristotle believed that the speaker should control and manipulate the inclination of his audience so that they were disposed to him and his material in the way he wanted. He identified three ways in which the speaker could do this: by presenting himself in a certain light to the audience, by disposing the audience in a certain way towards the speaker or his material, and through the use of ordinary argument.³ It would be of major interest to find Isocrates admitting a theory of ambiguous meaning while Aristotle maintained that the aim of rhetoric was to persuade to a point of view, thus ruling out more than one interpretation, for Isocrates was a major practitioner of rhetoric and Aristotle a major theorist.

The shift of authorized meaning from the author to a variety of audiences also has implications for the use of Isocrates as evidence for the image of Sparta. The current view is that his critique of Spartan policy is the 'only full-length and systematic attack on Sparta and the Spartan legend in Greek history'.⁴ His descriptions of Spartan policy and polity are of considerable interest to ancient historians, for there is precious little other evidence quite as full. Yet if Isocrates admits more than one meaning and audiences can read his critique of Sparta as praise or blame with more or less equal authority, the current view must carry only limited authority as merely one reader-reception among many. The criterion of audience-led interpretation of the speech changes the nature of Isocrates' 'evidence' completely: it means that he is offering no definitive view on Sparta, only the debate about the definitive view, in the terms in which it was conducted by some participants like the Spartan sympathizer. This may be just as valuable to historians, but it limits the kind of judgment they can make. This applies equally to his evidence about Athens. If he cannot assert the tyranny of authorial intent on Sparta, he cannot assert that of his apparent praise of Athens either. The pupil in the epilogue is happy to accept the praise, but he reads the intention behind the praise as the gratification of the Athenians to be expected of a native son (237,

261), not as the desire for truth and justice Isocrates had sought (39–40, 231). The criterion of ‘reader-reception’ leaves the meaning of the praise again insecure. It disables the evidence far more than Isocrates’ bias in favour of Athens: that can be weighed and controlled (62 ff., 155 ff.). Reader-reception cannot.

The view of the sympathizer – that Isocrates deliberately wrote his main argument to be read two ways at once by different audiences – is admittedly only one of the current interpretations of the epilogue. Others believed he wrote the original critique of Sparta as criticism, but had second thoughts about it, either, as the sympathizer says (239), because it was inconsistent with his praise of Sparta in previous works, or because he was genuinely shaken by the real-life reaction of the pupil in the epilogue, and wrote the epilogue as a way of modifying his earlier thoughts. This view has him introduce the sympathizer primarily as a vehicle for his second thoughts about Sparta rather than a mouth-piece for the theory of reader-reception. It is supported by the regrets he expresses in the epilogue about his earlier criticism.

This more widely held view was politely put by Norlin:

In one respect the speech takes an original turn (from the *Panegyricus*, which deals with the same sort of theme): in the sharp contrast drawn between the services of Athens to Greece and the disservices of Sparta. Indeed this part of the discourse, lavish in its praises of Athens, is equally intemperate in its arraignment of Sparta. This Isocrates himself feels at the end. He regrets that in his review of Spartan history he had been offensively unjust, and desires in some fashion to make amends to a state which...he does not wish to repel from the cause of pan-hellenism. But the device to which he resorts – the curious dialogue – ...has been, and will remain, one of the puzzles of literary criticism. There may, perhaps, be some foundation in fact for the ‘advice’ which Isocrates sought from his former pupils... Or it may be – and this seems more probable – that he invents this fiction of a debate in order to

show that he also could see the other side.⁵

and less politely by Tigerstedt:

The difficulty of discovering what Isocrates really meant cannot be put down only to his senility (!). It is obvious that the contradictions and, at least in part ironical, ambiguities in the dialogue are due to an inner uncertainty which clearly appears in Isocrates' disinclination either to approve or reject the interpretation of his disciple... In any case the epilogue shows one thing: Isocrates' hostility to Sparta is not absolute. There are situations in which it is moderated and one can even imagine situations in which the hostility, as he himself has hinted, makes way for sympathy and admiration.⁶

Current interpretations nevertheless all alike believe that Isocrates does at least partly authorize his audience to read his speech according to their natural sympathies, and that the final reading of the Spartan sympathizer carries at least some degree of authority. The general drift of the main part of the speech, however, does not support this view. Isocrates' comparisons of the policies of Athens and Sparta seem very critical of Sparta. The first part of the epilogue does not support it either. The sympathizer reacts initially as if the critique of Sparta was criticism (201), and his first attempt at praise meets with complete failure. He takes some time to reach his new reading of the speech as praise, and still more time to explain it (234–264).

Only the later part of the epilogue suggests that Isocrates wavered in his condemnation of Sparta or had a secret intention, and that he introduced his pupil to reveal his addiction to the criterion of reader-reception, or to represent the interests of Sparta more favourably by giving an alternative reading of his critique.

The authorial intention of this paper is to argue most tyrannically, against current interpretations, that it is wrong to read the epilogue as an authorization of the theory of reader-reception or as a modification of the criticisms of Sparta, that it is in fact an

affirmation of the criticisms and of authorial intent, and that this correct reading depends on recognizing the epilogue as a conventional rhetorical device.

In my view, although Isocrates recognized that some readers would attempt different interpretations of his critique of Sparta because of their disinclination to hear her criticized, he intended his words to be taken only one way, and that was as criticism. The sympathizer argues for the possibility of different readings according to a hierarchy of audiences, but he is not an authority. The correct reading of the presentation of his views in the epilogue indicates that his interpretation is being held up as incorrect and misguided. He is a negative paradigm and the epilogue is a rhetorical device designed to lead the audience to the one definitive point of view on Sparta, which is that her policies are deserving of severe criticism.

This confirms the authority of Isocrates' negative judgment on Sparta and means a return to the normal rhetorical theory in which the speaker is intent on persuading his audiences to adopt his point of view rather than allowing them to dictate terms. The rhetorical issue this raises is how Isocrates uses the epilogue to guide audiences towards the correct interpretation and make them accept his authorial intent on matters where their sympathies are challenged. The issue for the image of Sparta is the value of Isocrates' evidence about the views and activities of his opposition, the agents of the good image of Sparta, the Spartan sympathizers.

The action of the epilogue: weaknesses in the old argument

The epilogue is all about audience reaction. It describes the rather complicated reactions of the various audiences who discussed the speech at its first reading. They include: 1) the reactions to the original draft of sections 1–198 by the two groups of pupils and ex-pupils, particularly the three reactions of the Spartan sympathizer to the criticism of Sparta; 2) the

judgments of his two groups of fellow pupils on two of the reactions of the sympathizer; 3) Isocrates' own judgments on the various audience reactions referred to above.

Isocrates first describes how he read the speech through with some of his current pupils and how they praised it and set about helping him to design a conclusion. He also consulted the Spartan sympathizer, who had lived under an oligarchy, and whom he emphatically describes as a man inclined to praise the Spartans (200). He invited him to point out any *untrue* statements about Sparta. The sympathizer then began a sequence of reactions to the speech. First, he praised the speech because he could not fault the praise of Athens and could find no untruths in the criticism of Sparta, but because he naturally found the criticisms of Sparta unpleasant (οὐχ ἡδέως ἔχων) he 'dared' to say that, whatever could be said against their policies, the Spartans deserved praise for having discovered the best customs and given them to Greece.

Isocrates reacted sharply to this defence even though it was brief. He says he was ashamed to stand by while a pupil of his offered an immoral argument. Taking the sympathizer's reference to 'best customs' to mean the ways of wisdom and justice, he said he had never heard such nonsense (203–14). It was foolish to maintain that the Spartans invented the ways of wisdom and justice – that denied these ways to the earlier generations of heroes. It was also inconsistent to defend them after praising the speech as a whole. The Spartans were also educationally backward. They were the ones after all who taught their boys to steal and appointed the best thieves to the top positions. There is no support at all so far for the idea of a retraction of what appears to be a judgment on Sparta which even the sympathizer finds critical.

The sympathizer then shifted his position, at least as it appeared to Isocrates, though he may have only appeared to shift because he had not defined 'best customs' sufficiently well in his original remark. He now said that Isocrates was right to say Sparta had not invented the ways of wisdom and justice but that

his reference to 'best customs' meant only their unified action, training and discipline in war (215–17). He was not an uncritical admirer of everything the Spartans did but he felt obliged to say at least something on their behalf because it was his custom to praise them.⁷ Isocrates considered this reaction to the speech a shift of position but an improvement nevertheless, 'not an answer to my accusations, but a civilized and sensible (οὐκ ἀπαιδεύτως ἀλλὰ νοῦν ἔχοντως) cover for the great bitterness of his earlier words, and a more moderate defence in other respects than his previous loose talk' (σωφρονέστερον ἢ τότε παρρησιασάμενον) (218). But this did not prevent him presenting 'an even more effective criticism' of the sympathizer's new position, that though the Spartans had martial qualities, they used them for unjust wars against fellow Greeks (219–28). This completely silenced his opponent (229). Still no sign of a retraction of his hostility to Sparta or any possibility of a double reading.

The other pupils were the audience for this exchange and they praised Isocrates for his victory, saying he had 'competed like a young man (διειλεγμένον τε νεαρωτέως ἢ προσεδόκησαν ἡγωνισμένον τε καλῶς)' and disparaging his opponent, but Isocrates says their judgments were wrong on both counts. They did not see that his criticisms had reformed the sympathizer and made him wiser than before (φρονιμώτερος). Nor did they see that those same criticisms had made Isocrates himself look unwise (ἀνοητότερος), too proud for his years, and 'full of the confusion that belonged to the young' (230). His criticism, in other words, reformed its target but deformed the critic. This led him to reflect on the criticisms of Sparta he had made in the body of the work (231–3). He had the speech written down, but on reading it some days later, though still pleased with his just praise of Athens, he was distressed and displeased by his criticisms of Sparta. They seemed immoderate (οὐ γὰρ μετρίως ἐδόκουν μοι διειλέχθαι περὶ αὐτῶν), unlike those of others, contemptuous, too bitter, quite unintelligent (ὀλιγώρως, λίαν πικρῶς, καὶ παντάπασιν ἀνοήτως) (232).

Isocrates is here acting out the part of his own internal audience and finding his own criticisms of Sparta offensive. The theory of reader-reception would presumably have his regret arise from his feeling that he had not allowed sufficient scope for his critique of Sparta to be read as praise, but nothing in the passage supports that. The theory of his second thoughts sees it as the beginning of his alleged retraction. Yet he regrets the criticisms not because they are untrue or unjust, as this theory maintains, for even the sympathizer himself has already admitted their truth, but rather because they made him look bad. He did not change his mind about the vileness of Sparta. He merely regretted having exposed it so mercilessly and at such length. He later describes the sympathizer as the man 'to whom I had said more than what was necessary' (234). His concern is with his reputation as it manifests itself in his critical judgments.

He did nevertheless regret the criticisms so badly that he wished to destroy the work altogether. He gathered a more mature group of pupils to ask them whether he should destroy it or give it to them to do with it what they would.

As with the first audience, this new audience found no difficulties in the criticisms, but praised the speech like a display piece (ἐν ταῖς ἐπιδείξεσιν (233)). The sympathizer on the other hand, who was there again, though he had learned from his earlier defeat at least to some extent and had given up his attempt to praise Sparta by offering his own positive examples of her good service to Greece, now developed the argument that Isocrates had written about Sparta in a way designed to be read as criticism or covert praise according to the sympathies of the hierarchy of readers. He said the interpretation of the speech depended on the understanding of the intention (*dianoia*) behind it. His own understanding was that Isocrates had designed the speech to be read both ways so that he could win as much popularity as possible by pleasing as many audiences as possible, those who wanted to hear praise of Sparta and those who wanted blame, as well as those who wanted praise of Athens. Isocrates had gathered his pupils not to listen to their opinions

on publication, because he knew his pupils would praise him whatever he did, but to see if they could detect his brilliance. He had admittedly begun with the intention of praising Athens in comparison with Sparta, but he had come to realize in the course of developing the speech that this meant criticizing Sparta, which contradicted his previous praise of her arrangements and made him look inconsistent in his thinking.⁸ He decided for that reason to speak of Sparta in a way that would be interpreted by some readers as blame, but by others as praise (to seem to criticize the Spartans in the eyes of those who find them unpleasant, while doing nothing of the kind, but covertly praising them (239)). The sympathizer shows how Isocrates easily found ambivalent arguments and he gives a demonstration reading of the criticism of Sparta as praise, interpreting for example the fault of arrogance as the allied virtue of high-mindedness (242–4). This was then the intention behind the arguments of the speech (245).

The sympathizer has only one criticism which he is confident Isocrates will accept. He wants Isocrates to declare this intention. He knows Isocrates will say that clarification of the *double-entendre* will detract from the reputation of both speaker and speech by 'implanting understanding in those without knowledge' (245–7), but he ventures to know more than his teacher and suggest that his reputation will be even more secure if he exposes his true intention by announcing it in the speech (248–9). The Spartan audience would hate him and be ill-disposed to him for his criticisms (*ἂν ἐμίσησαν καὶ δυσκόλως πρὸς σέ διετέθησαν*) if they read them as such; but if the sympathizer can show them how to read the criticisms as covert praise, they will be grateful to Isocrates for this (250–9). Isocrates will then win himself great praise and huge reputation because he will have praised the Spartans and Athenians both:

It seems to me that during your lifetime you will win a reputation not more than you deserve, for that would be difficult, but among more people and more generally agreed than your

present one, and when you die you will have a share in immortality, not that of the gods, but that which plants a memory in those who come after of those who have excelled in some noble achievement. You will justly have this reputation. For you have praised both cities nobly and fittingly, Athens according to the opinion of the masses, whom no man of reputation has yet dismissed but all would endure any danger in their desire to gain it, but Sparta according to the reasoning of those who try to aim at the truth, among whom some would prefer to have a name in preference to all the world even if they were twice as numerous as they are.' (260–1).

The other pupils who form his audience praise the sympathizer for his interpretation of the hidden intention of the speech and endorse his recommendation that Isocrates reveal it (264). Isocrates praises him too, but only for his character and training. He says he held his tongue about the accuracy of his reading of his intention: *περὶ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων οὐδὲν ἐφθεγξάμην ὧν εἶπεν, οὐθ' ὡς ἔτυχεν ταῖς ὑπονοήαις τῆς ἐμῆς διανοίας οὐθ' ὡς διήμαρτεν, ἀλλ' εἶων αὐτὸν οὕτως ἔχειν ὥσπερ αὐτὸς αὐτὸν διέθηκεν* ('As for the rest of what he said, I said not a word, neither that he had correctly grasped my thought, nor that he had missed it, but I let him remain in the same frame of mind in which he had disposed himself') (265).

Isocrates' response is often taken as approval but this is difficult to uphold. He has already undermined the sympathizer's interpretation by making him contradict what Isocrates has already maintained about his intention in both the main argument and the epilogue. Isocrates has him contradict the reasons he gave for consulting his pupils, for example. Isocrates said he consulted them because he was worried about the criticisms of Sparta and wanted their advice (233). The sympathizer declared that the speech contained nothing Isocrates could regret saying about Sparta, and that Isocrates was not so foolish as to seek advice from pupils who were used to praising everything he did and by definition his inferiors in judgment (234–5). He said that

Isocrates called them together to test their understanding of the speech (236). He went on to contradict Isocrates' explanation of his original decision to compare Athens with Sparta. He said Isocrates wanted to win great reputation for novelty of argument (237–8). Isocrates had said the comparison was the best way of revealing the truth (39–41). Moreover, while Aristotle recognized the blurring of the distinction between allied concepts like arrogance and high-mindedness as a legitimate rhetorical practice, and this supports the sympathizer's interpretation, Isocrates himself elsewhere deplored it.⁹

Nor does Isocrates' final version of the speech advertise the possibility of reading the criticism as praise in the way the sympathizer wanted. His comment that he let the sympathizer remain 'as he had disposed himself' (265) even suggests he would have liked to dispose him some other way. The sympathizer was disposed to praise Sparta to the extent of seeing praise in criticisms. He was also disposed to praise Isocrates. The desire to dispose him some other way would be to make him to accept the criticisms as they were and make him less extravagant in his flattery of his teacher. The term Isocrates uses of the disposing of the sympathizer (διέθηκεν) is also the word Aristotle (n. 3) uses of the manipulation of the audience by the speaker to accept his point of view.

Isocrates ends his dramatization of the events of the epilogue here, but then explains how he spent the next three years completing the speech, struggling against disease and almost giving up writing altogether, but being encouraged by his pupils, who praised the sections they had already heard so immoderately that they ran the risk of seeming false and he of seeming corrupted by praise (266–70). They expected him to secure his reputation in Sparta in the way the sympathizer had suggested; but Isocrates completed the speech to his own satisfaction. He clearly wrote the epilogue at this time but it is not clear whether he revised the main argument. The difficulties for our assessment of the sympathizer's reading of the speech would of course be considerable if he did, but it is more likely that he did not.

The theory that he accepted the reading of the sympathizer need not envisage major revisions, for the sympathizer thought the speech would be acceptable with not much more than a clarification of intention (262). My own theory that Isocrates intended to confirm his criticisms calls for no revision either. The theory that he decided to modify his earlier criticisms might imply major revision, but he could also have left the original criticisms *in situ* and merely acknowledged the more favourable point of view in the epilogue.

Isocrates then adds a conclusion to the epilogue. This seems to many as puzzling as the epilogue itself, but it is consistent with it in one very important respect, namely, that it focuses on the major theme of the epilogue, which is audience reaction to criticism. The difference is that where the epilogue described negative reactions to criticism by audiences internal to the speech, the conclusion endorses the positive reaction to criticism in the audience external to the speech:

Why have I gone through these events? Not to win sympathy, for I do not think I have written about them in that kind of way, but because I wished to show what happened to me, and wished to praise among my listeners those who accept this speech and who (in judging) other speeches consider that instructive and technical speeches are more serious and philosophic than speeches written for display and competition, and those that seek the truth than those that seek to soothe the opinions of the listeners, and those that chastise wrongdoers and warn them than those that are spoken for their pleasure (τοὺς ἐπιπλήττοντας τοῖς ἀμαρτανομένοις καὶ νουθετοῦντας τῶν πρὸς ἡδονὴν καὶ χάριν λεγομένων). I also wish to advise those who think the opposite not to trust their own judgments first of all, nor to consider true the opinions expressed by the lazy-minded, then not to utter rushed words on matters where they are ignorant, but to wait until they are able to agree with those who have great experience of what is being revealed. If they take up this attitude (*dianoia*) themselves,

none would think them foolish (266–72).

The conclusion is typically verbose, with balanced phrases fleshing out the basic opposition of ideas, but it clearly endorses the positive acceptance of speeches of criticism against speeches of praise, presenting instructive, technical, truthful and chastizing speeches as more serious and philosophic than speeches of display and competition or those that cater to audience prejudice or seek to gratify them. This suggests a connection with the preceding epilogue. The sympathizer there rejected the criticisms of Sparta and read them as praise. He read the speech as catering to the inclination of the Spartan audience and its desire for praise and gratification. His fellow pupils endorsed this reading. The conclusion appears to warn against the audience reactions that the epilogue describes. Isocrates certainly disapproves of the excessive praise his pupils bestowed on him (269).

The conclusion confirms this connection when it refers back to the epilogue with the use of the transitional phrase, 'Why have I told this story'. Isocrates has designed the epilogue to prove the advice in the conclusion. He has already undermined the accuracy of the reading of his authorial intent by the sympathizer in the epilogue. He now offers the internal audiences of the epilogue as negative paradigms for the external audience of the conclusion to avoid. He thus confirms his authorial intent and disposes his immediate audience to accept his criticisms of Sparta.

The conclusion and the epilogue therefore affirm the criticism of Sparta in the main part of the speech. Current theories that Isocrates recanted his criticism must be wrong. The epilogue cannot be read as a rejection of the criticisms in the main body of the speech or in the epilogue itself when the conclusion appeals to the authority of the epilogue to endorse them. This also rules out the possibility of two equally authoritative readings of the speech. Isocrates could hardly ask his audience to accept critical speeches in the conclusion while drawing back from them in the epilogue.

The new argument

The new argument confirms the reading of the epilogue as a negative paradigm of reaction to criticism by recognizing it as a rhetorical convention expressing a conventional pattern of thought. The convention addressed the problem of the critic and his audience. It identified the rejection of criticism as a negative paradigm in order to persuade the audience to accept criticism. This was in the interests of the truth and the reform that criticism sought to achieve. Rhetoric regularly sought to dispose the audience to accept the speaker's point of view. Isocrates regularly drew attention in other speeches to the problem the critic had in persuading audiences to listen to criticism. These passages form a series of *topoi* which help explain the epilogue.

On the Peace (355 BC) presents the problem in narrative form and uses a very basic form of the convention. Isocrates addressed an Athenian audience and criticized their current policies in order to reform them, but he had to ensure that they would listen to his criticism. The problem was that criticism was instructive and improving, but also unpleasant and unwelcome, and the audience at which it was directed was unlikely to listen to the critic or think well of him. The Athenians listened only to those who pleased them (πρὸς χάριν...πρὸς ἡδονήν κτλ. (10)) and were ill-disposed to those who criticized and admonished them (ἐπιπλήττοντας καὶ νοουθετοῦντας (14)). This is the same negative reaction to criticism Isocrates warns against in the conclusion to *Panathenaicus*, where he also uses the same terminology.

The negative reaction to criticism left the critic with a difficult choice. He could serve either the interests of his own popularity by pleasing his audience and suppressing even fair criticisms, or the interests of his audience by criticizing them fairly to produce reform. He could not serve both. Speeches that criticize wrongdoers (λόγος ὁ τολμῶν τοῖς ἀμαρτανομένοις ἐπιπλήττειν) benefit their audiences, but turn them against the critic (38–40). The critic improves the audience, but is himself reviled and hated

(80). Isocrates again uses the same terminology to describe the speeches of criticism he advises audiences to accept in the conclusion to *Panathenaicus*. His choice is to affirm his criticisms in *Peace*, serving the interests of his audience even while expressing regret for the damage his criticisms will do to his reputation. He can be expected to make the same choice in *Panathenaicus*.

Isocrates was of course disposing his audience to like him and listen to his criticisms even as he defined the problem of the critic. He was inviting them to see him as the selfless champion of their true interests, prepared to sacrifice his reputation to serve them. No doubt some reacted favourably to this conventional appeal for a favourable hearing.

Isocrates faces the same problem and makes the same choice as critic in his criticisms of Sparta and her policies in other speeches, and these express the conventional appeal in terms of the speaker's concern for justice as well as reform. *To Archidamus* 12 asserts: δεξαίμην ἂν δικάως ἐπιτιμήσας ἀπεχθέσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ παρὰ τὸ προσήκον ἐπαινέσας χαρίσασθαι ('I would prefer to make just criticisms and be hated than to give unfitting praise for the purpose of gratification'). *Panegyricus* 129 ff. guards against the loss of reputation implicit in criticism thus: 'Let none suppose that I am ill-disposed because I have made these criticisms rather harshly, after having said before that my speech is about reconciliation. I have not spoken this way about them in order to slander them to the rest of Greece, but in order that, so far as speech can, I make them desist from this opinion of theirs. It is impossible to turn them away from errors, or turn them to a desire for other actions, unless someone criticizes them roundly for their current policy.' He repeats his preference for giving Spartans critical advice rather than easy praise in the letter *To Archidamus* 1-7 (356 BC).

The epilogue to the *Panathenaicus* also addresses the problem of the critic and his audience, and the identification of the problem as a convention now permits a more correct reading. First, it seems highly unlikely that Isocrates did actually choose to serve the interests of his popularity by praising the Spartans

as the sympathizer suggested. This must mean that he rejected the sympathizer's reading of the speech. Secondly, the regrets Isocrates expresses about the harshness of his earlier criticisms of Sparta in the epilogue (228 ff.) are the regular regrets the critic always experiences when expressing criticism. They focus as they always have on the unfortunate image they project for the speaker and how they will damage his reputation with his audience. Yet they do not lead him to abandon the criticisms. They are still there in the final version of the speech. They are no more a prelude to the recantation of criticism in *Panathenaicus* than in *Peace*, nor should they be taken in any way as an endorsement of praise of Sparta.

Isocrates also addresses the problem of the critic earlier in the work in terms that foreshadow his regrets in the epilogue. He says in criticism of rivals: 'What men could you find more evil than these (for it must be said, even if I run the risk of seeming to some to be more youthfully offensive in my speech than suits my advanced years; εἰρήσεται, εἰ καὶ τισι δόξω νεώτερα καὶ βαρύτερα λέγειν τῆς ἡλικίας) who...' (16). He recognizes the damage his criticisms may do to his reputation even as he makes them. His comment that the offence in his criticism will seem to some of his audience like that of a youth (rhetorical shorthand for a man unable to control his passions), foreshadows his later description of his violent reaction to the sympathizer's attempt to praise Sparta as 'youthful confusion', which his pupil audience wrongly admired (ὥς διειλεγμένον νεαρωτέρως (229), παραχῆς μαιρακιδῶδους μεστός (230)). He poses the problem in an even earlier criticism of Sparta in the same speech in terms that also foreshadow his later regrets (95 ff.): 'I know clearly that I am abandoning the mildness of speech (πραότης) I had when I began to write, and am about to speak on subjects I did not think to treat then, that I am bolder (θρασύτερον) than my usual character and losing my control (ἀκρατῆ) of some things I am saying because of the multitude of subjects that rush in.' His denigration of his character acknowledges the damage his criticisms do his reputation, but he speaks freely (παρρησία) and

openly (οὐ κατασιωπητέον) (96). Compare the thought of *Peace* 41.

The statement and re-statement of the problem of the critic in these passages show how important it was to Isocrates. Indeed, it is possible to read the epilogue and conclusion together as another dramatized re-statement of the problem. Isocrates shows himself in the first exchange with the sympathizer offering stinging criticisms of Sparta. He says that they improved the sympathizer, thus confirming their reforming potential, but the old problem arose, that they made the critic seem very harsh, and this the critic came to regret. He accordingly hesitated, on the brink of the damage he will do to his reputation with the Spartans if he persists. He has chosen to serve the interests of reform above his own and is playing out in front of his external audience the effects of his preference on his internal audience and himself.

In the second part of the epilogue the sympathizer confirms that his speech in its present state will make the Spartans hate him and that he will lose popularity, and he tempts him to take the easy way out by allowing a more favourable reading of his criticism. This would certainly serve the interests of his popularity, but it would not serve the interests of the true critic. Isocrates has never previously modified his criticisms to this extent in the interests of his reputation, nor will he do so now. His final version of the speech shows that he conquered his regrets about his reputation and decided to live with his criticisms. His epilogue shows him confirming this choice and his conclusion tells his audience to accept it. It courts their favour by showing what a high price he paid for his choice. He complained earlier in the work that misrepresentation of his beliefs had led to his 'inability to obtain the reputation I deserve, not even the generally agreed reputation, nor that which certain of those have who have spent time with me and thoroughly know me' (21). The sympathizer, as if in reply, predicts that if he permits his criticism of Sparta to be read as praise, 'It seems to me that in your lifetime you will obtain a reputation not greater

than you deserve (for that would be difficult) but more generally agreed than that you now have' (260). Isocrates could never contemplate winning popularity through this further misrepresentation of his beliefs at the expense of the truth.¹⁰

But this simple reading of the epilogue does not explain the emphasis on the opposition of the sympathizer to the criticism of Sparta and on his perverse and plausible misinterpretation of authorial intention. There is a more specific convention at work on the problem of the critic and his audience which focuses on this negative reaction to criticism.

The central feature of this more specific convention is the introduction of an internal audience to illustrate the rejection of criticism and to offer it as a negative paradigm for the immediate audience to avoid. Isocrates proceeds from the dramatised illustration of the negative reaction, to criticism of the internal audience in the epilogue, to the direct advice to the immediate audience in the conclusion to adopt the positive reaction, the acceptance of the criticisms. This progression is a specific pattern of device which he uses elsewhere to dispose his immediate audience to listen to his criticisms by showing them the folly of the negative reaction in a third party. The works in question are *To Nicocles* (374 BC), and *To Philip* (346 BC).

The treatment of the problem of the critic and his audience in *Peace* already contains the germs of this combination of the illustration of the erroneous negative paradigm with direct advice to avoid it. There the one immediate audience was criticized for showing the negative reaction in order to encourage them to show the positive. The use of a secondary audience for the illustration of the negative reaction represents an advance on this. This audience is already in use in *To Nicocles* decades before *Peace*, so the advance to the third party paradigm is not simply chronological. It may be that Isocrates prefers it in addressing audiences who have a special aversion to direct criticism. To criticize the failings of the immediate audience in a secondary audience, as a negative paradigm for the immediate audience to avoid, is more tactful than direct and open criticism of the

immediate audience itself. Isocrates criticizes his own fellow Athenians openly, but in addressing Nicocles and Philip, who were rulers of considerable power, he uses the third party paradigm. Ancient rhetoric indeed defined kings as difficult audiences and recognized the use of the third party paradigm as the safe way to criticize them. They could otherwise prove dangerous.¹¹

The first example of the use of the internal audience as a negative paradigm in an embryonic form of the convention in question is *To Nicocles* 42 ff. This is a work of admonition, consisting of a series of moral instructions addressed to Nicocles, son of Evagoras, the powerful ruler of Cyprus c. 374 BC. Isocrates completes the main part of the advice, then attaches an epilogue (42–53) in which he discusses negative audience reaction to the kind of work he is writing. He identifies it as a critical kind of work and addresses the problem of the critic and his audience in the conventional terms of *Peace*. He declares that most people do not like works of admonitory advice because they read like criticism. They are improving but not pleasant, and people prefer pleasure and folly to moral improvement and reform. He acknowledges as in *Peace* 56 that not all people react negatively (47), but he believes that writers who want to please the larger audience should steer clear of admonition and say what the mob want to hear. ‘All men consider the advice of writers in poetry and prose most useful but they do not like to listen to them and they react as if they were admonishing them (νουθετοῦντας) (42)... Those who want to charm their audience have been shown that they must avoid admonitory advice (νουθετεῖν καὶ συμβουλεύειν) and say what they see the mob likes most’ (49).

Isocrates then makes the transition from this general internal audience of ‘most people’ and their negative reaction to his immediate audience, Nicocles, and he gives him direct advice about how not to react like the internal audience:

Ταῦτα δὲ διήλθον ἡγούμενος σὲ δεῖν, τὸν οὐχ ἓνα τῶν πολλῶν
ἀλλὰ πολλῶν βασιλεύοντα μὴ τὴν αὐτὴν γνώμην ἔχειν τοῖς

ἀλλοῖς, μηδὲ τὰ σπουδαῖα τῶν πραγμάτων μηδὲ τοὺς εὖ φρονούντας τῶν ἀνθρώπων ταῖς ἡδοναῖς κρίνειν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῶν πράξεων τῶν χρησίων αὐτοὺς δοκιμάζειν ('I have gone through these matters thinking that you, who are not one of the many but king of many, should not have the same attitude as the rest, nor judge by the standard of pleasure what are serious matters and which are sensible men, but to test them by the usefulness of their activities') (50).

The subject of both the digression and the direct advice to Nicocles is audience reaction to critical instruction. Isocrates first defines the negative paradigm of the audience who find instruction unpleasant and prefer gratification. He then tells Nicocles to reject their example and pursue the positive audience paradigm, preferring the standard of what is useful to what is pleasant, and the instruction Isocrates offers to the dramatic competitions others prefer. He does this by playing on his sense of royal superiority. He is a king and should rise above the general low level of 'the many' and not give in to pleasure as they do.

Isocrates uses the discussion of the reaction of the secondary audience, as he used direct address to the immediate audience in *Peace*, to dispose his immediate audience to react favourably to his critical instruction. He uses the terminology of Aristotle for this: ὁμοίως ἂν καὶ πρὸς ταύτας διατεθεῖεν ('they would be disposed in like manner with respect to these matters') (44). The main difference is that his approach to Nicocles is less aggressive. He does not attack him for rejecting instruction, but points to others as models to avoid.

The second use of the convention in a form perhaps half-way between that of the epilogue of *To Nicocles* and the epilogue of *Panathenaicus* is *To Philip* 14 ff. Isocrates wrote this speech in 346 bc to persuade Philip of Macedon to unite the Greek world and lead it against Persia. He introduces the convention early in the work. It again involves the description of the negative reaction of an internal audience, but this time his audience consists of his

pupils rather than just 'the many'. Moreover, he presents their reaction not as a straight description of a negative reaction to the general kind of work he is writing, but as a partially dramatised account of what happened when he specifically consulted them about his plans for this speech. The negative paradigm seems to take firmer shape. The changes from the 'many' to the pupils, from observation to consultation, from straight narrative to dramatized presentation and from the generic to the specific but incomplete work, all bring this instance of the convention closer to the epilogue of the *Panathenaicus*.

Isocrates told this pupil audience that he intended to write for Philip not a display piece or a speech of praise (οὐκ ἐπιδείξιν ποιησόμενον οὐδ' ἐγκωμιασόμενον τοὺς πολέμους) but a speech that would try to direct him (προτρέπειν) towards a better political course. This defines the work as the type of instruction he said the imagined audience of *To Nicocles* would find so much like criticism and so unpleasant. He said his intention was not to please Philip, though he might incidentally do so (οὐκ ἐπὶ τοῦτω τὴν διανοίαν ἔσχον (14)). It is then no surprise that the pupil audience reacted negatively to the proposal, dared to criticize him for thinking of it (ἐτόλμησαν ἐπιπληξαί μοι) and told him he was engaging in a foolish enterprise (ἀτόποις καὶ λαν ἀνοήτοις πράγμασιν). They are a kind of substitute audience for Philip and react negatively because they said Philip would react negatively. They also of course criticize Isocrates, raising the question of his own reaction to criticism. Isocrates dramatizes their reaction and has them argue in a short speech that Philip would not accept advice because as a king he thought himself a person of superior counsel, already had the best advisers and was successful (18–21). Isocrates thus confirms that speakers did have special problems in criticizing kings (n. 11 above), because they considered themselves already above advice.

But Isocrates was convinced that his advice would be well received and he told them why. He refuses to give an account of the arguments he used on the grounds that if he repeated them, he would seem too pleased with his success, but he does say that

he gave his pupil critics a mild amount of pain. He was so confident that he could make them see the light that he offered to show them the work when completed and put the decision in their hands alone as to whether it would be sent to Philip (22). They then departed. He says he did not know their state of mind at that time, but that when they saw the completed work some days later, their reaction to it was completely positive. They felt shame and regret for their former negativity, they said they had never been so wrong in all their lives, and they now prophesied that the speech would win huge gratitude from Philip, his city and all the Greek world (23).

This change within the internal audience from the negative to the positive reaction is a development from *To Nicocles* which seems to give greater authority to the subsequent endorsement of the positive reaction in the immediate audience. Isocrates seems to have made the original change from 'the many' to his pupils, and from narrative to dramatised presentation, to facilitate it. He could more plausibly represent changes in the reactions of pupils than 'the many' because he had more natural authority over pupils, and he could far more plausibly engage them in dialogue, which was also the most natural way he could impose his authority.

Isocrates then makes the transition from this internal audience to his immediate audience as he did in the earlier use of the convention, and he gives direct advice to Philip in reference to the earlier audience. The transition is marked by the same transitional phrase: *τούτου δ' ἕνεκά σοι ταῦτα διῆλθον* and the connection made is again explicit. The advice to Philip is that he should not rush to judgment or react to the speech in the same way as his pupils, but read it right through to the end in an unruffled state of mind before reacting:

Τούτου δ' ἕνεκά σοι ταῦτα διῆλθον, ἵν' ἂν τί σοι φάνη τῶν ἐν ἀρχῇ λεγομένων ἢ μὴ πιστὸν ἢ μὴ δυνατὸν ἢ μὴ πρέπον σοι πράττειν, μὴ δυσχεράνας ἀποστῆς τῶν λοιπῶν, μηδὲ πάθῃς ταῦτ' οἷς ἐπιτηδείους τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἀλλ' ἐπιμείνῃς ἡσυχάζουσιν ἔχων τὴν

διανοίαν ἕως ἂν διὰ τέλους ἀκούσης ἀπάντων τῶν λεγομένων
(24).

The plain style of the speech and the circumstances of its delivery will assist him. Philip will be able to give the speech his undistracted attention, and have time for the leisured response his pupils lacked. He should abandon prejudice against speeches designed to be read and take up each point one after the other, not reading lazily, but with the reasoning of philosophy which they say he possesses, avoiding the opinion of 'the many' (25–9). This is again the terminology of the conclusion to *Panathenaicus*, particularly the advice to the audience to question and dismiss facile judgments and not rush to hasty conclusions.

The subject of the digression and the direct advice to Philip is audience reaction to a speech that sought to advise Philip to follow a certain course of action. Isocrates defines the pupils as the negative paradigm of the secondary audience who come too hastily to the conclusion that the speech will not please its immediate audience and are then proven wrong, and he offers them to Philip as a negative paradigm to avoid. He encourages him to be the positive paradigm, who will read the whole speech through before reacting to it, prefer the standard of what is useful to what is pleasant or persuasive, and accept the kind of instruction he offers. He encourages Philip in the same way he encouraged Nicocles, by playing on his sense of royal superiority. He is a king and has a reputation for philosophy. He should rise above the low level of mere students of that art. He encourages him further by showing that his pupils came to regret their initial hasty reaction.

Isocrates uses the convention to guide Philip's audience response because he knows that Philip may take offence at the advice. His pupils indicate that this was their worry when they praise the final version of the speech on the grounds that it will now win huge gratitude from Philip. Isocrates confirms the possibility of offence when he urges Philip not to become *angry* and leave off reading as soon as he comes across something he

finds unbelievable, impossible or unsuitable, but to read it through to the end in an *unruffled* state of mind (24).

Isocrates is addressing the same problem in both these passages, that of the critic and his audience. He rises to the challenge of ensuring favourable audience reaction to criticism by defining the negative audience paradigm, showing its folly, and encouraging his immediate audience to avoid it. The differences between the two uses of the convention are significant. This negative reaction comes from the general audience in *To Nicocles* but from the pupil audience in *To Philip*. Both audiences share the necessary identity of people who have a lot to learn, but the pupil audience gave Isocrates more opportunity to make them admit their folly. This in turn gave more authority to his endorsement of the positive reaction in the immediate audience, which saw the negative paradigm proven wrong by its own admission. The second use of the convention actually has the best of both worlds. The two types of audience merge and Philip is urged to avoid the example of the pupil audience as well as the opinion of the many. The other significant difference is in the placement of the paradigm. It occurs in the epilogue of his advice to Nicocles, but in the preface to his speech to Philip. The epilogue may seem the natural place, but Philip, as a mature and successful king, was less likely to read the advice through to the epilogue than Nicocles, and Isocrates felt a more urgent need to dispose him to read on. The idea that he will not even read the speech through, let alone accept the instruction, is the very heart of Isocrates' concern.

The epilogue of the *Panathenaicus* can now be recognized as a form of the convention. Isocrates gives another account of how he consulted his pupils. They are a secondary audience within the speech and find their parallel in the internal audiences of the other conventions. The focus of interest is again their reaction to criticisms in the speech. The convention follows the main argument as in *To Nicocles*. The similarities between the main stages of the action in *To Philip* and *Panathenaicus* are particularly striking.

- 1) Isocrates consults his pupils about an incomplete stage in the composition of the speech, in A (= *To Philip*) the idea behind it, in B (= *Panathenaicus*) sections 1–198 in draft. The incomplete state of the work will allow him subsequently to write his account of the consultation as part of his advice on how to read the speech.
- 2) He receives a negative reaction: in A from the whole group; in B only from the Spartan sympathizer, while the others give a series of positive reactions to the speech and negative reactions to the sympathizer.
- 3) He refutes the negative reaction, openly and violently in B, being too modest to repeat what he said in A. The pupils in B miss the reforming effect of the refutation on the sympathizer, in A they perhaps feel the reforming effects themselves (?).
- 4) In B alone, but not in A, he regrets his refutation of the sympathizer, as well as the criticisms in the speech that gave rise to the sympathizer's reaction.
- 5) He puts the final decision about publication into the hands of the original group of pupils in A, confident of their ultimate approval. He does the same in B, but with a new group, and in despair about the outcome.
- 6) The pupils move from negative to positive reactions to the speech. In A they move from criticism of the intention behind the speech to praise of the final version. In B the sympathizer moves from rejection of the criticisms in the first part of the epilogue to acceptance of the criticisms in the second *once he is permitted to read the intention behind them as praise*, while the other pupils move from acceptance of the criticisms to acceptance also of his alternative reading.

There are further similarities. The account of internal audience reaction is again followed by the direct address to the immediate audience, this time in the conclusion. The transition from the internal to the more immediate audience is again marked by the formula that belongs to the convention: Ταῦτα δὲ διήλθον ('I have gone through these matters') in the first (50); τούτου δ'

ἐνεκά σοι ταῦτα διήλθον ('I have gone through these matters for this reason') in the second (24); and in this third example of it, τίνας οὖν ἔνεκα ταῦτα διήλθον ('Why have I gone through these matters?') (271). The direct advice to the immediate audience that follows is, as expected, advice to the audience about how to read the speech, and this advice is substantially the same as is given Nicocles and Philip, to listen to criticism in preference to praise, instruction in preference to pleasure, etc.

The identification of the epilogue as a convention which offers internal audience reaction as a negative paradigm for the immediate audience to avoid confirms that the reaction of the Spartan sympathizer carries no authority. There is no longer a case for saying that his reading of Isocrates' intention is valid. The convention rules against it.

The similarities of the action and even the vocabulary show that Isocrates is consciously reworking the convention, for example in A (23): τούτων ἀκούσαντες ἀπήλθον, οὐκ' οἶδ' ὅπως τὴν διανοίαν ἔχοντες; in B (230): ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἀπῆει φρονιμώτερος γεγενημένος καὶ συνεσταλμένην ἔχων τὴν διανοίαν. The changes he makes to the convention should therefore be significant. The first is that he singles out the Spartan sympathizer for special attention among the internal audience of pupils, and the remaining pupils become the sympathizer's own internal audience, reacting not only to his speeches, which are themselves reactions to the speech of Isocrates, but also to Isocrates' responses. The second is that he makes the sympathizer lead his audience not only to reject Isocrates' criticisms, but perversely to deconstruct them and read them as praise. There is also more emphasis on the problem of the critic than in previous versions of the convention. The reasons for these changes must now be addressed.

Isocrates did not describe the pupil audience in *To Philip* as Macedonian sympathizers, but he insists on identifying the pupil in *Panathenaicus* as a panegyrist of Sparta. This seems to be because the critic confronts a particular problem in criticizing Sparta, which is the existence of the tribe of Spartan

sympathizers. He has made the reactions of Spartan sympathizers a target of special attention throughout the speech, identifying them as a particularly persistent problem audience who will try to oppose and counter his criticisms at every turn, and digressing from his main argument to anticipate and crush their opposition. The sympathizer of the epilogue is another of their tribe and reacts to the criticisms of Sparta in very similar ways. Isocrates writes the epilogue and conclusion to confront this final phase of the pattern of opposition he has already identified earlier in the speech.

Isocrates first refers to Spartan sympathizers when he is claiming that the virtues of Athens will shine brightest if they are compared with those of Sparta. He must show at this point that Sparta is no mean point of comparison. She is therefore a city which 'the many praise moderately, but some commemorate as if the demi-gods had set up a constitution there'. He will nevertheless show her to be as inferior to Athens as other cities in Greece are inferior to Sparta (41).

His first confrontation with the sympathizers comes after his first main section of criticism of Sparta (62 ff.):

But I think that while those who find these criticisms unpleasant to listen to, will not be able to contradict their truth nor cite other actions whereby the Spartans were the authors of many benefits to the Greeks, they will try nevertheless to denounce our city as they always have, and catalogue our most offensive actions in the time of the sea empire.

But Isocrates goes on to show that their denunciation will be pointless, since though much can be said against Athens and her policies, far more can be said against Sparta and hers (64 ff.).

His second confrontation comes after his second main section of criticism (108 ff.). He says there that the best and most sensible sympathizers will concede his criticism of Sparta's policy but continue to believe in the superiority of her polity, but the more extreme will try to praise this polity in order to prove Athens inferior. He goes on to prove the Athenians superior in this

respect as well, even though it is irrelevant to his purpose (112 ff.).

The first group of sympathizers demonstrate a sequence of anticipated reactions, some of which are repeated by the second group: a) displeasure, b) inability to fault the accuracy of the criticisms, c) inability to come up with a positive argument. These foreshadow the initial reactions from the sympathizer in the epilogue. When the sympathizer first reads the speech, a) he remains displeased with the criticisms but, b) he can find no untruth in them so, c) tries to offer positive proof of the services of the Spartans to Greece. He first claims that they discovered the 'best customs', but Isocrates easily proves him wrong. He then offers a more specific argument about what he meant by their 'best customs', but Isocrates easily proves him wrong again. He fails to make his case and is reduced to silence.

Isocrates thus identifies the sympathizer of the epilogue as part of a wider negative paradigm of rejection of criticism. He creates the paradigm of wrong-headed and persistent opposition to criticism by setting up Spartan sympathizers one after another, then knocking them down. He has anticipated the denunciation of Athens and countered it by proving that whatever Athens may have done, Sparta has done worse. He has anticipated the old argument about the superiority of the Spartan polity and countered it by proving the Athenian polity older and better. The sympathizer of the epilogue then anticipates him and tries to prove they have the best customs, but he meets with failure. There are now no avenues of natural argument left. The sympathizer has seen his fellow travellers crushed in the earlier part of the speech and he has failed in his own attempt. Surely he must now accept the praise of Athens and the criticism of Sparta, policy and polity? Yet he is nothing if not a conventional sympathizer, who never gives up, as he has implied earlier (216). When Isocrates' conventional regrets as critic gave him the further opportunity, he therefore seized the only position left, which was to accept the letter of what Isocrates said, but re-interpret his intention. The sympathizer of the epilogue is the

apotheosis of his tribe. The audience can imagine no more ingenious opposition than this. If Isocrates proves him wrong, he will have silenced the sympathizers for ever. Which is exactly what he does do, by undermining his argument and presenting it within the constraints of the convention.

The desire to show the persistent wrong-headedness of the sympathizers explains the other development of the convention, which is that whereas in *To Philip* the pupils move from the incorrect to the correct reaction to the speech, the sympathizer here moves from one incorrect reaction to another. Rather than correcting, he compounds the negative paradigm.

But the specific problem posed by the final argument of the sympathizer in the epilogue is different from that posed by earlier sympathizers or by earlier versions of the convention, and this explains the sub-division of the internal audience, which is the final development of the convention. The sympathizer did not just oppose Isocrates' criticisms. He went on to misinterpret their intention and read them as praise. Isocrates has already identified the problem of misinterpretation in the long prologue as the chronic malaise of his 'professional' life (5 ff.): 'I am continuously slandered by obscure and worthless sophists, and by others am thought to be not what I am, but what they hear I am from others'. The sympathizer is a fresh manifestation of the problem. Isocrates described in the prologue how rival sophists habitually misread his speeches, quoting passages out of context and generally twisting their meaning (16 ff.), but how he felt particularly moved to defend himself against the charge they made against him in public at the Panathenaea, that he despised the old education (17 ff.). Elsewhere, he defends himself against the misinterpretation of the intention of his criticisms (*Paneg.* 129 ff., *Peace* 72). He meant them to reform their audience, but they were taken as mere insults.

The problem with the misinterpretation of the sophists was that they had actually persuaded their audiences. The sympathizer, like the sophists of the prologue, not only misinterprets

Isocrates' criticisms but misleads his audience into accepting his misreading. This then explains the division of the internal audience. Misinterpretation involved one principal audience misleading another. Isocrates splits the audience to show the effect the sympathizer's misreading has on his fellow pupils. The misreading was more difficult to counter than the opposition of other sympathizers because it was based on Isocrates' own words, and it was more difficult to attack than the misrepresentations of rival sophists because it professed to serve Isocrates' own interests by increasing his reputation. The epilogue therefore exposes the danger of a particular sort of misrepresentation, which can twist Isocrates' words and make even his closest supporters in their audiences believe that he authorizes praise of Sparta. His pupils were of course invariably misled. The first group wrongly praised Isocrates for his victory over the sympathizer in the first exchange on the grounds that he has competed well (229), and the second praised the speech as if it were a display piece (233). The conclusion warns against preferring speeches of both these sorts.

The epilogue and conclusion warn against rejection of criticism and the misrepresentation of Spartan sympathizers. Isocrates seems to make a particular appeal to those already inclined to sympathize with Sparta. His conclusion echoes earlier advice he has given in this context. For example, it advises against rushing to judgment. Isocrates has already warned the sympathizer in the epilogue that this was a general weakness in the context of judgments on Sparta (221 ff.):

Whenever people see or hear from others that certain people practise what seem to be good customs, they praise them and speak many words about them, not knowing what will occur. Those who wish to apply correct tests to such things should keep unruffled in the beginning and form no opinions about them (ἐν ἀρχῇ μὲν ἡσυχίαν ἄγειν καὶ μηδεμίαν δόξαν ἔχειν περὶ αὐτῶν), but when they come to that time when they see them speaking and acting on affairs private and public, then they

should examine each of them exactly and praise those who use their customs lawfully and well, but blame and hate those who go astray and do evil, and avoid their ways (221 ff.).

Isocrates also concedes in the body of the speech (109) that the more sensible sympathizers will 'agree with what I have said about what they have done with respect to the Greeks' (περὶ δὲ τῶν εἰς τοὺς Ἕλληνας πεπραγμένων ὁμονοήσιν τοῖς ὑπ' ἐμοῦ λεγομένοις). His conclusion seems to address the less sensible among their tribe in warning those who do not accept his criticisms 'to wait until they are able to agree' (περιμένειν ἕως ἂν ὁμονοῆσαι δυνηθῶσιν).

Isocrates was rightly concerned about misrepresentation of his speeches. His prologue makes an issue of the fact that he did not deliver them in person (9 ff.), and the epilogue confirms that he gave copies to his pupils and ex-pupils to use as they thought fit (233). This means they passed out of his control. The sympathizer confirms the danger when he says he will go to Sparta and misinterpret the speech for those Spartans who possessed copies (149 ff., 262). This was not beyond the bounds of possibility. Hippias visited Sparta and delivered the kind of literary readings the Spartans wanted earlier in the century.¹²

The conclusion on the rhetoric of the speech is that Isocrates had authorial intent and went to some length to make his audiences accept it. The convention and its development point to the exact nature of the negative paradigm the immediate audience must avoid, which is not only opposition to his criticisms of Sparta, but misrepresentation of them, and the substitution of false praise. It is completely wrong to read the epilogue as the endorsement of the reader-reception criterion or as evidence that he wavered in his criticism of Sparta. That is to accept the very misrepresentation he sought to avoid. Its function is rather to secure the criticism of Sparta against misinterpretation. Fourth-century rhetoric required him to offer a definitive point of view about the criticisms of Sparta which are so crucial to his main argument. His decision to leave the sympathizer 'as

he had disposed himself suggests that he abandoned some audiences; but the completed speech, which presented them as models to avoid, was a fitting final response to the problem he posed.

The educated ancient audience would have recognized the convention. Modern audiences have not recognized it, but ancient audiences were accustomed to formulaic patterns of narrative as the building blocks of epic and other literature. Modern audiences also resist those conventions they do readily recognize, for example, finding those who profess themselves unaccustomed to public speaking a little transparent; but Isocrates had not overworked his convention and ancient audiences had not built up a resistance. They would have found it effective. The parallel with Homer provokes particular thought. Homer developed and adapted his conventional scenes to his characters and their circumstances. Isocrates develops and adapts his convention in similar ways. For example, the changes he makes in the internal audience seem designed to improve the effectiveness of the convention in its own right. The earliest example (374 bc) uses the audience of the many, but subsequent examples present the more effective paradigm of the pupil audience. The *Panathenaicus* represents the latest and longest development of the convention. This may suggest elaboration for its own sake, but the elaboration also reflects the persistence of the opposition to criticism, which is the particular problem of the speech.

Isocrates' special concern with the problem of opposition and misrepresentation certainly leads him to single out the Spartan sympathizer and split the internal audience into the further speaker/audience combination of the sympathizer and his fellow pupils. He also positions the conventions where they will be most effective in the speech, addressing Philip in the early stages before he puts the speech down in disgust, but leaving other examples to the epilogue. The convention is in these ways and perhaps others part of his rhetorical arsenal, ever in a process of refinement and adaptation, as set-piece scenes were part of Homer's poetic stock.

The image of Sparta

Isocrates had a negative perception of the image of Sparta, but he presents interesting evidence about Spartan sympathizers and their endorsement of the positive image. The first step in assessing the evidence is to recognize that it has its limitations.

The aims of the speech are the first limit on the extent and nature of the evidence. The praise of Athens in comparison with Sparta was a rhetorical theme even older than Pericles' funeral speech. Isocrates wants to praise Athens and gives as his reasons (37): 1) those accustomed to denounce her in reckless fashion; 2) those who have praised her inadequately; 3) those who have glorified her so much that they have aroused hostility against her; but 'most of all': 4) his extreme old age, which means that a good speech will secure his reputation, whereas a poor one will be forgiven. This suggests that his choice of theme is motivated by failings in past treatments of the theme, including extremes of praise and blame. This implies that he is concerned to praise Athens, but in a balanced way, neither too much nor too little, and that this is how he will outstrip others and secure the reputation he seeks.

The hallmark of his praise does seem to be its balance. The introduction of Sparta as a point of comparison makes his praise of Athens accurate and just by securing the balance (38–9). It lets him honestly admit that he cannot defend Athens' more indefensible actions, but also lets him balance this with the assertion that they are nevertheless more defensible than Sparta's (64–5). He achieves further balance by criticizing contemporary Athens, but praising the ancient city (145, 155).

This balance gives his praise credibility. His letter *To Philip* (342 bc) says that his praise of Athens has always been credible because it has struck the balance by avoiding extremes (16, 22). Isocrates' preoccupation with the problem of the critic has already shown him concerned to strike the balance by avoiding gross flattery or unfair criticism. He is prepared to sacrifice his immediate popularity with his audience in the interests of

truthful criticism, and wishes to avoid untruthful praise on the grounds that it damages his integrity, even while it wins favour. He defends his criticisms as being designed to reform rather than motivated by personal malice. The idea that the speaker should have moral virtue as well as technical expertise was basic to his view of rhetoric. Indeed, he considered the morality of the speaker more important. He puts his moral above his artistic reputation in his digression on Agamemnon and prefers to serve virtue rather than his reputation for skill (86). He also preferred to see his pupils getting a reputation for good character than for technical skill even though he knew this would not advance his reputation as a teacher of technique (87). Isocrates concerns himself with his reputation to secure a good hearing (6). This was in keeping with the general rhetorical theory that required the speaker to demonstrate his good character so that he could persuade the audience to listen to him and take his views seriously. He also had purely personal concerns. He did not want to be seen as excessive in praise or blame. He wrote the *Antidosis*: 'to compose a speech as an image of my thought and my life' and 'to leave it behind as a memorial far finer than statues in bronze' (7). The *Panathenaicus* was also concerned to put the record straight.

We need look no further than the desire to praise Athens in a balanced manner and secure his reputation to explain Isocrates' choice of theme. His decision to compare Athens with Sparta arose directly out of this and was a necessary part of the balance (39–40). To praise everything Athens did was wrong, to praise everything she did in comparison with Sparta was right. He addresses the image of Sparta not for its own sake, but for the sake of the balance.

The idea that his theme was a political issue for his audience is worth considering, but hard to sustain. He had praised Athens in comparison with Sparta in order to endorse her as the more worthy leader of the Greeks in his *Panegyricus* (380 BC), but at that time their rights to leadership were still significant. His speech *To Philip* recognized the new reality, that the power of

Athens and Sparta had declined and that the king of Macedon was the new candidate for leadership of Greece. The failure even to mention Philip in the *Panathenaicus* suggests he was not presenting Athens as the political leader of the Greeks. Philip was too deeply involved in the issue to be left out. Isocrates could have been promoting the leadership of Athens over Sparta in some limited area like the Peloponnese, but here too, the political question was the choice between Sparta and Philip, not Sparta and Athens. Besides, Isocrates thinks they have different spheres of political interest. Sparta was fighting against Argos in the Peloponnese (92). Athens was trying to retain control of the remnants of her maritime Confederacy (141–2). Isocrates could also have praised Athens in order to promote her as a friend of Philip, as in his letter *To Philip* (14–16), but in that case he would have addressed Philip directly, as he does in that letter and elsewhere. Besides, he declares in the *Panathenaicus* that he does not intend to praise Athens in connection with other matters (e.g., the question of leadership, as he had in the *Panegyricus*), but for its own sake (35). This endorses the plain view, that he wrote the speech to offer balanced praise of Athens as an end in itself, using the comparison with Sparta to achieve it.

There was, of course, a contemporary educational issue inherent in praise and blame of cities like Athens and Sparta. Aristotle addressed this issue in *Politics* (1334a40–b3) when he declared that imitation of the Spartan way of life led to a lop-sided kind of virtue. The issue was whether individuals or states should be educated through imitation of the Athenian way of life or the Spartan. Isocrates assumes throughout his speech that the key to a good education is to lead pupils to adopt the correct models for imitation. He also assumes that praise leads to imitation and that criticism leads to rejection. His own praise and blame will therefore lead his audience to praise and imitate the good way of life and criticize and reject the bad. He sums this up when he says (137) that he praises the audience who like to hear about the virtues of men and the ways of a well governed state, and

that if any had the wish or ability to imitate these, they would spend their lives amid great reputation and would make their cities blessed. This is an invitation to imitate the virtues and the ways of the Athenians. The benefit will be in the traditional area of being recognized as a good man who will do good for his city, which is a private benefit as well as a public one, a cultural as well as a broadly political benefit. Isocrates specifically connects the impulse to imitate with praise, speaking of those who *admire and envy and strive to imitate the ways of the Athenians* (155). Section 223 confirms in reference to Sparta that when men do good, they should be praised, but when they do bad, they should be blamed and hated *and their way of life avoided*. Section 184 adds that men show their character in what they praise. If they praise Sparta, they reflect the bad qualities she possessed. Section 100 confirms that imitation of Sparta could lead to immoral behaviour, by describing certain Athenian generals who imitated the brutality of the Spartans in dealing with their allies and proved their education deceptive. The Spartan sympathizer says that the Spartans have been teachers because they offer themselves as models (202), but he implies that Isocrates might expect his criticism of their ways to make them reform their character (250).

Isocrates certainly could address this educational issue. Athens and Sparta remained significant cultural and educational role models well after their military and political decline. Philip was not part of this issue because the monarchic state was a less generally acceptable educational model for Greeks than the oligarchic or democratic.

The educational issue was broadly political in that educational values influenced public and private life. Spartan sympathizers could simply imitate the outward signs, growing their hair and beards and taking to physical drill, but they could also endorse and practise the Spartan style of dealing with other states, as the generals did above, or the Spartan style of constitution. They might even want their cities controlled by Sparta. When Isocrates speaks of the choice the Athenians made to develop

their empire, with attendant injustice to the allies, rather than be subject to the Spartans (114 ff.), he says all sensible men would prefer this, even though some claiming to be wise, if they were asked, would say they would reject it (118). The idea that Sparta could ever threaten Athens in the later fourth century as she had done in the fifth seems unlikely, but there were other cities for whom the choice was still a reality, like Argos (92).

Political issues nevertheless seem only an extension of the rhetorical and educational issues. The correct way to read the evidence about the image of Sparta is in its rhetorical and educational contexts. These certainly limit the extent and nature of the interesting evidence about Spartan sympathizers. Isocrates provides evidence of an extreme range of views of Sparta in the speech. There is his own criticism, designed to balance his praise of Athens. There are also the views of the opposition, a wide range of Spartan sympathizers, some extravagant, some moderate in their praise of Sparta, some accepting a modicum of criticism, some accepting none. Isocrates represents their views on Athens as also various. Some accepted her as worthy of praise, others denounced her. The question of the correct balance of praise and blame in this wide range of views is never far away. The sympathizer in the epilogue is as committed to his praise of Sparta as the others (216), but he accepts the praise of Athens and even, at first, some of the criticism of Sparta (215).

Isocrates merely sketches the more general opposition to his criticisms. He treats the sympathizer in the epilogue in more detail, but still in an educational and rhetorical context, in keeping with the focus of the speech. He is presented as an expupil of Isocrates and therefore a skilled speaker (229). The trouble is that his skill with words produces his ingenious misinterpretation of Isocrates' speech, proof of the danger when technical skill is separated from good moral attitudes.

Isocrates approaches a political context when he says that the sympathizer has lived under an oligarchy, but he does not say where, and seems concerned only to explain his natural

inclination to praise the Spartans, who were also oligarchic. The epilogue shows the sympathizer operating in an educational and rhetorical context, opposing and misinterpreting Isocrates' speech to the audience of pupils. The sympathizer suggests a similar context when he says that he will take the speech to Sparta and interpret it for the select few of the cultivated classes, who already possess and admire some of Isocrates' speeches (250–1). Isocrates also presents their audience reaction to praise and blame within the terms of the rhetorical convention. The sympathizer says the Spartans will consider him a friend if he appears to praise them, but if he criticizes them, they will hate him. This is the typical Isocratean audience reaction to praise or blame, which involves dislike of the critic and admiration for the flatterer.

The rhetorical/educational focus of the speech limits the evidence. It is nevertheless impossible to avoid speculating about the political implications of the indication that the sympathizer is mediating the views of Isocrates back to Sparta and promoting the favourable version of the image of Sparta. The value of such speculation depends on whether Isocrates' evidence about the sympathizer is basically accurate. The rhetorical convention in which the sympathizer exists is unlikely to be a literal truth, but perhaps it does not matter whether Isocrates did call him in to test the accuracy of his criticisms of Sparta, or whether the events of the epilogue did unfold as he says they did. The similarities between his reactions and the reactions of other sympathizers in the body of the speech suggest in any case that Isocrates conceives him as a type. The real question is whether there is even a general truth in what Isocrates says about the sympathizer's role as mediator of his speeches. There are reasons why Isocrates might have made even this up. The introduction of the Spartan audience is another way of illustrating incorrect audience reaction to praise and blame. It also promotes Isocrates as a man whose fame extended even as far as Sparta.

Several points can be made in favour of the idea that the sympathizer is drawn from real life. The first point is that

Spartan sympathizers were a phenomenon of the fourth century and they came in a range of colours. The sympathizer naturally finds his place among them. Isocrates reproduces this range in the body of the work, from the best and most sensible to the meanest and most excessive. Since they did exist, they did presumably oppose his criticisms of Sparta. The sympathizer's perverse misrepresentation of Isocrates' views also seems real enough to one used to continuing misrepresentation in modern times.

The second point concerns the idea that the sympathizer would take Isocrates' speech to the Spartans and that some of them would read it. The idea that the sympathizer was responsible for the circulation of this speech is in keeping with Isocrates' general evidence on how his speeches were 'published' (233, 262). He did not give public readings (9), but he had them copied (200, 231) and gave these copies to his pupils to use as they thought fit (233, 262). The copies found their way even into the hands of his rivals (17). This supports the idea that the sympathizer would take his copy to Sparta and would be able to use it as he thought fit, i.e. to praise Sparta.

There is also evidence that the Spartans to whom he says he will take the speech were not only literate, but receptive to certain forms of literature and certain types of literary luminaries, in spite of their reputation for xenophobia. The sympathizer defines his audience as the cultivated classes, presumably the old nobility, the families that made up the *gerousia* and provided the kings. His indication that they could read is contradicted by Isocrates' own sweeping indictment of Spartan illiteracy, but this may be a generalisation which did not apply to their class (209). They would not of course need to be skilled readers to have the speech explained to them by their agents (250), but the sympathizer also implies they will be able to read it for themselves (252). Spartans at these higher levels of society were indeed literate.¹³ They even had their own sub-literary tradition of philosophic aphorisms which Socrates 'admires' in the *Protagoras* (342a-344b). There is also evidence that they received

literary visitors like the sympathizer and listened to readings of literature that fitted their *ethos*. The *Hippias Major* indicates that the Sophist Hippias visited them and read at their request.¹⁴ Xenophon's well known association with Agesilaus is unlikely not to have had a literary aspect to it. His encomium of Agesilaus seems tailor-made for the Spartan audience. The sympathizer maintains that the select few among the Spartans already possessed and admired some of the works of Isocrates. Some of his works indeed cried out for a Spartan audience. They cannot all be dismissed as rhetorical exercises. His letter *To Archidamus* was formally addressed to that king and was overtly designed to give him counsel (1–7). His earlier dramatic *Archidamus* confirms this interest in a Spartan audience. The sympathizer's description of the likely Spartan audience reaction to praise is also particularly plausible, in spite of being conventional. Xenophon portrays them as addicted to praise and claims that this was a sign of their virtue.¹⁵ They would be interested in public opinion.

Since the idea of the mediation and interpretation of the speeches of Isocrates by Spartan sympathizers to a Spartan audience does seem to be at least plausible, it is in order to speculate whether Spartan audience reaction to his alleged praise would end with mere gratitude to Isocrates, which is as far as the speech wants to make the evidence go, or whether they were also interested in using his praise for political ends, spreading it abroad, or having their agents and friends do so. This involves the question how far the sympathizer's type was prepared to go in advancing their cause.

The sympathizer's familiarity with Isocrates and the Spartans suggests that he moves relatively freely in the upper levels of Athenian and Spartan society. It is unlikely this will have been merely in the capacity of visiting literary critic. His praise of the Spartans would make him a 'friend' of the Spartans in the political as well as the personal sense. The Spartans cultivated a network of 'friendships' through the Peloponnese and elsewhere and controlled the cities by ensuring that their friends had their full military and political support.¹⁶ Isocrates'

sympathizer could be a member of such a network and could have his home in any of the cities of the time who enjoyed Spartan-linked oligarchic rule, particularly in the Peloponnese. His visit to Sparta might then be part of the regular political or diplomatic business of his city. He might also be in contact with other Peloponnesian states and in an excellent position to carry them news of the views of Isocrates. He might even use his misinterpretation of Isocrates' views in winning more friends for Sparta in her attempts to retain/regain control of the Peloponnese. He could explain away the praise of Athens as he did in the epilogue, as due to the obligation Isocrates felt to praise his own people, whereas he could point to the 'praise' of Sparta as the free expression of a well known outsider. It counted for more because Isocrates was not obliged to praise them, and the more famous he was, the more telling his praise.

The sympathizer's mediation of Isocrates' views might even be evidence of a programme designed to 'recruit' prominent publicists to the cause of Sparta in the interests of developing her public image. The sympathizer offers Isocrates the prospect of enhancing his reputation with the Spartans and winning their gratitude if he agrees to let his speech be read as praise of the city. This is to 'recruit' him to the cause. Isocrates in return can expect whatever benefits there might still be in Spartan friendship. The sympathizer implies that some Spartans already thought well of Isocrates because of his previous writing. His letter *To Archidamus* and the speech *Archidamus* could certainly have won their favour. Isocrates did not intend these to praise Sparta. Indeed, he begins his letter by declaring that he intends not to praise but to counsel them (1–7), and his *Archidamus* is also a speech of critical counsel, not delivered by Isocrates in his own person, but put appropriately into the mouth of the prince. The sympathizer might nevertheless have misinterpreted these as the pure praise he also sees in the *Panathenaicus*. Isocrates was a person of standing in Athens. His 'recruitment' carried the guarantee of excellent propaganda for the cause, as well as penetration inside the network of Greek educationalists. There

were others who genuinely praised Sparta, but the sympathizer may have thought that Isocrates cast a long shadow. The idea that he might be recruited against his will would give Isocrates extra reason to use the epilogue to dispel any false notions that he was praising Sparta.

There is nevertheless a danger in removing the sympathizer from the convention of the epilogue and the rhetoric of the speech and taking the evidence out of its rhetorical and educational context. Isocrates presents the sympathizer as the embodiment of the incorrect attitude to praise and blame, particularly the preference for gratifying praise over instructive criticism. He is the panegyrist of Sparta in particular, but he exhibits his preference for praise in other ways as well, for in the process of turning the criticism of Sparta into praise, he accepts the praise of Athens and praises Isocrates as the panegyrist of both cities. The sympathizer clearly could have a life outside the speech, but inside the speech Isocrates' perception of him is limited to rhetorical and educational terms.

The sympathizer has been proven correct in his prediction that the *Panathenaicus* would give Isocrates widespread fame and a certain kind of immortality. The praise of Athens in comparison with Sparta has continued to have a universal and timeless appeal. Isocrates himself implies a primarily Athenian audience when he identifies with the Athenians as 'self' against the Spartans and their sympathizers as 'other' (42, 54, 62 ff., 66 f, 98, 109 ff., 155 ff., 159, 176, 182, etc.) and refers to Sparta as 'there' as opposed to 'here' (153, 155), yet he need not have meant this to restrict the audience to Athenians. The typical Athenian audience, as varied as the pupils Isocrates had summoned, certainly included sympathizers on both sides, and Isocrates' indication that he would 'publish' the speech by giving copies to his pupils suggests that he counted on wider circulation (233, 262). Some would merely read the speech to groups at Athens on private occasions or public occasions like the Panathenaia (16–19), but those among them like the sympathizer could take their copies as far as sympathy for either Athens or

Sparta extended. Isocrates could have relied on their mediation to reach a Spartan audience. He criticized the Spartans in order to reform them in *Panegyricus* (129 ff.) and *To Archidamus* (1–7), and this must have involved them as an audience. The sympathizer says they will ignore the *Panathenaicus* if they read it as criticism and remain true to their old ways (250: ἤθεσι), but Isocrates might have hoped that there would still be some among them who could be turned to better.

To summarize, Isocrates aimed to praise Athens in a balanced way through critical comparison with Sparta (35–41). His problem was that audiences wanted to be praised but not criticized. He knew that Spartan sympathizers would prove to be particularly resistant to his criticisms and he confronts their persistent attempts to discredit his praise of Athens and criticism of Sparta throughout the speech, as if he is competing with them for the hearts and minds of the audience. He probably wanted to reform their views, but he gave up on the sympathizer in the epilogue. He certainly wanted to dispose his wider audience to reject their views and accept his own. He also probably wished to reform the views of those who were too sympathetic to Athens, since he wrote the speech partly to correct their lack of balance (38). The speech contains some criticism of Athens they would also resist.

Isocrates used the epilogue to develop the rhetorical convention to secure the true intention of the speech by offering negative paradigms of internal audience reactions. The internal audiences consist of pupils who make wrong judgments. The sympathizer leads the way and the others follow. He first challenges the criticisms of Sparta outright, then when defeated, he persuades the others to misread them as gratification of Sparta and her sympathizers. He also persuades them to misread the intention behind the praise of Athens as gratification of the Athenians and their sympathizers (237, 261). The conclusion points to the error of the sympathizer and the innocent fools he misled when it praises those who accept speeches that offer instructive and truthful criticism, and warns those who prefer speeches that

offer gratification, flattery and competitive displays that they should not be too confident or hasty in reaching judgment. The pupils have already demonstrated their preference for display and competition, as well as flattery and gratification of Sparta and Athens and Isocrates himself (229, 233, 237, 239, 261, 269). Isocrates is using the convention in the normal way, showing that his pupils are wrong in their judgments and directing his audience not to accept their misreadings or repeat their mistakes.

Isocrates exhibits the correct attitude to praise and blame. He prefers to give truthful and instructive criticism in spite of the personal cost in popularity. He also prefers to receive it. In the epilogue he criticizes his own attack on Sparta and rejects the praise his pupils gave him for the praise they supposed he gave Sparta. This rejection of the universal popularity he might have won by flattering Athens and Sparta in the way suggested by the sympathizer and endorsed by the pupils served to confirm his reputation for integrity in the area of praise and blame and secure it against misrepresentation. He was no flatterer of others, nor did he accept flattery from them. The question of the correct attitudes to praise and blame is indeed such an issue that the speech might be read not just as a balanced praise of Athens, but as a rhetorical essay about the problems speakers encountered in the practice of praise and blame, a suitable swan-song for one who had spent his life engaged in such practice.

Notes

- 1 E.N. Tigerstedt, *The Legend of Sparta in Classical Antiquity* vol.1 (Stockholm, Goteborg and Uppsala 1965) discusses the controversy at length with full bibliography (179 ff. 702 ff.); Hans-Otto Kröner, 'Dialog und Rede zur Deutung der Isokrateischen Panathenaikos', *Antike und Abendland* 15 (1969) 102–21 has appeared since; and most recently G.A. Kennedy, 'Ancient antecedents of modern literary

- theory', *AJP* 110 (1989) 492–8, with his reference to K. Eden, 'Hermeneutics and the ancient rhetorical tradition', *Rhetorica* 5 (1987) 59–86.
- 2 Kennedy (above, n. 1) esp. 495–7.
 - 3 Aristotle *Rhet.* 1 2 3: ἐν τῷ ἤθει τοῦ λέγοντος...ἐν τῷ τὸν ἀκροατὴν διαθεῖναι πως...ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ λόγῳ ('in the character of the speaker...in his disposing the audience in a certain way...in the argument itself'; 1 2 5 on the disposing of audiences in particular: διὰ δὲ τῶν ἀκροατῶν ὅταν εἰς πάθος...προαχθῶσιν. οὐ γὰρ ὁμοίως ἀποδίδομεν τὰς κρίσεις λυπούμενοι καὶ χαίροντες ἢ φιλοῦντες καὶ μισοῦντες ('by means of the audience when they are brought to feel emotion, because we do not deliver the same judgments when we are grieving as when we are glad, or when we love as when we hate'); 3 1 1 repeats the thought.
 - 4 Tigerstedt (above, n. 1) 187 for the short description.
 - 5 G. Norlin (trans) *Isocrates* vol. II (Loeb 1929) 370.
 - 6 Tigerstedt, 196. I do not discuss the views of Kröner (above, n. 1) in this paper because they do not account for any of the complexities of the epilogue. He believes Isocrates introduces the sympathizer merely 'um Sparta den Platz zu geben, den es einnehmen muss, damit dieses Lob seinem vollen Wert erhält' ('to give Sparta the place which it must have in order to give this praise of Athens its full worth') and that 'er muss zu dieser Form greifen, um überhaupt in einer Lobrede auf Athens einen Preis Spartas einfügen zu können' ('he must adopt this form in order to be at all able to introduce praise of Sparta into an encomium of Athens') (116). He maintains 'Ein Lob Spartas aus dem Munde eines Spartanerfreunde kann diese Auffassung für den verständigen Leser nur erhärten. Ein Lobpreis Athens ist daher letztes Ziel und Inhalt der Rede' ('Praise of Sparta from the mouth of a Spartan sympathizer can only confirm this for the intelligent listener. Praise of Athens is therefore the final aim and intention of the speech') (119).
 - 7 The Loeb translates the implied object of εἰθισμένος τὸν

- ἄλλον χρόνον ἐπαινεῖν (216) ('accustomed other times to praise') as Isocrates. The sympathizer does later say (235) that the pupils are also accustomed to praise Isocrates, but his principal characteristic on introduction is that he is accustomed to praise Sparta (200). The context of 216 certainly suggests Sparta rather than Isocrates as the object.
- 8 The claim that Isocrates had previously praised Sparta to that extent is dubious. In *Archidamus* Isocrates puts the praise into the mouth of the Spartan king, not his own. The same applies to *Nicocles* 24, which is from the mouth of that monarch. There is favourable reference at *Peace* 142 ff. but this applies only to the Spartan kingship system, not its whole record. Another such reference is *Areopagus* 7, but praise for the rise of Sparta is there balanced against blame for her fall. *To Archidamus* makes a special point of announcing that the aim is not praise but counsel. There seems no straightforward and unqualified praise in other speeches.
 - 9 Aristotle *Rhet.* 1 9 28 ff. suggests that the speaker may interpret allied qualities for praise or blame, like arrogance and high-mindedness. Isocrates himself (*Antidosis* 283–5) completely deplores such twisting of value terms.
 - 10 Isocrates asserts the greater importance of justice and truth over concern for reputation in another passage in *Panathenaiscus*, this time not of blame but of praise, and makes the point that this is always his choice when faced with a conflict of interest. He says he will praise Agamemnon 'in order to assist a man who has experienced the same fate as myself and many others, and has missed out on the reputation he should have had, and though author of many great blessings at that time, is less praised than those who have done nothing worthy' (75, also 78). He looks to lose his own reputation in doing justice to that of his subject. The greatness of Agamemnon requires a very long passage of praise and the immoderate length of it will be criticized as a lack of moderation in his character. He makes the connection between immoderate length of his writing and immoderate

- character elsewhere too (33). Nevertheless, he refuses to cut his praise. He prefers to do justice to the reputation of Agamemnon than serve expediency and preserve his own reputation (84 ff.): ἀλλ' ὁμῶς ἐγὼ τὸ λυσιτελὲς ἐάσας τὸ δίκαιον εἰλόμην (86). This preference is a feature of his whole *dianoia*: οὐ μόνον δ' ἂν εὐρεθείην ἐπὶ τοῖς νῦν λεγομένοις ταύτην ἔχων τὴν διανοίαν ἀλλ' ὁμοίως ἐπὶ πάντων (87).
- 11 Aristotle does not say so, but Demetrius *On Style* makes a special point of it in his discussion of the use of the covert allusion (σχῆμα) 287–94, holding that it is dangerous to criticize rulers to their face and that the use of a negative third party paradigm is advisable. He includes the Athenian *dēmos* as one such ruler (294).
 - 12 Plato or [Plato] *Hippias Major* 285d–286a. The work may not be genuine, but its description of the teachings of Hippias at Sparta is accepted as true. See H. Gomperz, *Sophistik und Rhetorik* (Stuttgart 1965) 68–79 on Hippias.
 - 13 P.A. Cartledge, 'Literacy in the Spartan oligarchy', *JHS* 98 (1978) 25–37.
 - 14 N. 12 above. It is interesting to note that the Spartans had well defined views about what they wanted to hear: περὶ τῶν γενῶν...τῶν τε ἡρώων καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τῶν κατ-οικίσεων...καὶ συλλήβδην πάσης τῆς ἀρχαιολογίας. They also admired the account Hippias gave them of how Nestor taught Neoptolemus the ways that get a young man a good reputation.
 - 15 Procles of Phlius, a faithful friend of Agesilaus, says (Xen. *H.G.* 6 5 42) that the Spartans had a long record of 'reaching out for praise and avoiding shameful actions'.
 - 16 See the operation of the network of Spartan friends in the case of Phlius (*H.G.* 5 3 10–17, 21–5), and the promotion of her good image by these friends (*H.G.* 6 5 38–48) in the crisis of 370 BC.

VIII

PLATO AND SPARTA: MODES OF RULE AND OF NON-RATIONAL PERSUASION IN THE *LAWS*

Anton Powell

This paper seeks to explore resemblances between, on the one hand, non-argumentative and deceitful techniques of persuasion, and modes of rule, used by the authorities at Sparta and, on the other hand, elements of Plato's *Laws*. That Sparta inspired much of this text was established for modern readers by Glenn Morrow's study, *Plato's Cretan City*. More recent investigation of Sparta by others may enable us now to go further in tracing Lakonian influence on the Athenian philosopher.

Near the end of the *Laws*, a work which has often repelled by its austerity, comes a ringing statement of the need for hierarchy and for communal living (942a ff.). The context is war and the preparation for war. Plato has emphasized early in the work that warfare is not the proper goal of society (626–8), but here he stresses that the training in hierarchy and in communality, which war requires, belongs also to peacetime and should begin in childhood.¹ Using language contrived to be alliterative and balanced, brief yet repetitive, he states his position memorably, in a form designed for recitation to the young (943a). No one should ever be without a commander (*ἀναρχον*), or become used – even in play – to doing anything on his own initiative. One should practise to command and be commanded. Life should be lived as far as possible in common, in a crowd (*ἀθρόον*), synchronized (*ἄμα*) (942a–d, cf. 807d–e). Independence (*ἀναρχίαν*)

should be entirely removed from the lives of all human beings and of the animals they control. The famous reference in the *Republic* (563c) to the insubordinate horses and donkeys of the democratic city is now revealed as no mere joke.

Points of resemblance to Sparta may be apparent already. (Others occur in the immediate context. Some of the clearest concern the need for trainee warriors to tolerate unsatisfactory diet, extremes of heat and cold, coarse bedding and the absence of shoes.)² In Xenophon's *Lakedaimoniōn Politeia*, a work structured to contrast Sparta with the rest of Greece,³ it is suggested that the Spartans were unusual in deliberately ensuring that their boys were never without someone present to command them (οὐδέποτε ἐκεῖ οἱ παῖδες ἔρημοι ἀρχοντός εἰσι).⁴ Also reminiscent of Sparta is Plato's phrase here, ἀρχειν τε ἄλλων ἀρχεσθαί θ' ὑφ' ἑτέρων ('to command others and be commanded by others again') (942c). Similar word-play involving this verb occurs in several passages of the *Laws*, as at 643e where eagerness to act rightly in the giving and taking of orders is said to define the educated person, and at 685d where the sons of Herakles are described as having a better reputation than the Atreidai as commanders of commanders (ἀρχόντων ἀρχοντας).⁵ These Dorian Heraklids were the supposed ancestors of the historical dyarchs of Sparta.⁶ The phrase ἀρχοντες ἀρχόντων had been used by an earlier Athenian writer; Thucydides stated that, at the battle of Mantinea, almost all of the Spartan army consisted of 'commanders over commanders'.⁷ Sparta was singled out in a Pythagorean text as exemplifying the principle of commanders themselves commanded.⁸ That Sparta preached the importance of knowing how to 'command and be commanded' was probably a commonplace in later antiquity.⁹

Let us proceed to particular techniques of control.

Gerontocracy

That rulers should be philosophers of a special kind is much less

emphasized in the *Laws* than in the *Republic*; so much is well known.¹⁰ Less often explored is the greater emphasis in the *Laws* on old age as a qualification for rule.¹¹ That office-holders should be at least 50 years old is mentioned some six times in the *Laws*, once in the *Republic*, a work less concerned with practical detail.¹² An age requirement of at least 60 years is mentioned some four times in the *Laws*, seemingly never in the *Republic*.¹³ There is also, as we shall see, much use made in the *Laws* of the superlative πρεσβυτατ- ('oldest', 'most senior'). Stalley, in his recent study of the *Laws*, writes, 'The frequent harping on the virtues of old age...suggests that this is an old man's work.'¹⁴ Popper takes a similar view: 'Only an old man may criticize a law, adds the old writer...'¹⁵ Aristotle records that Plato wrote the *Laws* later than the *Republic*.¹⁶ The hypothesis of an elderly author, overtaken by death, has been encouraged by features of the style of the *Laws*. The work has often seemed to lack final polish.¹⁷ E.B. England in his commentary on the *Laws* stated that the book 'shows a weakness for verbal jingles, which some may think senile.'¹⁸ There is external testimony suggesting that the *Laws* was a product of the author's old age, left 'in the wax' at his death and subsequently transcribed by Philippos of Opous.¹⁹ We shall assume here that the *Laws* is indeed a late work. But that Plato was writing in old age would hardly in itself justify us in expecting him to extol his own age-group as uniquely worthy of power. He resisted, after all, conventional assumptions about the superiority of his own sex and his own city. Oldness in the writer is not sufficient to explain his commendation of old age. Is there no other plausible source of the idea that in politics old was best?

It may help to give a brief account of the role of the elderly at Sparta. The *gerousia*, Sparta's supreme court, is prominent in our sources; it could overrule and punish a king.²⁰ Election to it was most keenly contested; success brought much celebration of the preferred individual.²¹ Appointment was for life; γέροντες, in this connection at least, were defined as those over 60.²² Impressive testimony to the influence at Sparta of the elderly

comes from the present work of Plato. The Athenian stranger says to his Spartan and Cretan interlocutors:

one of the best regulations you have is the one which forbids any young man to inquire into the...merits of the laws... If an old man has some point to make about your institutions, he must make such remarks to an official, or someone of his own age when no young man is present (634d–e).²³

The association of old age and power is not unique to Sparta; it may indeed be virtually universal in settled societies.²⁴ From elsewhere in Greece one thinks, for example, of the semantic range of the word *πρέσβυς*, 'old man', 'ambassador'; of Aiskhines' claim that there was once formal precedence for speakers over 50 in the Athenian assembly;²⁵ of signs of informal discrimination against the young in politics;²⁶ or, graphically, of the bald negotiator in the Second Frieze of the Nereid Monument from Xanthos.²⁷ But, on surviving evidence, among the states of classical Greece Sparta stands out for its formal concentration of power in the hands of the elderly. And, at a later period at least, Spartans attached to *πρέσβυς* a secondary meaning of their own: it seems from inscriptions of Roman imperial times to have been the regular term for 'president' of a panel of officials, such as the ephors.²⁸

Honours given to the old at Sparta represented the culmination of an elaborate hierarchy based on age and beginning in early schooldays.²⁹ Xenophon contrasts Spartan respect for elders with Athenian contempt for the old.³⁰ Herodotos suggests that Sparta was unique among Greek states in the respect it gave to old age; only at Sparta did the young make way in the street, and give up their seats, for their elders.³¹ The latter procedure, at least, seems to have been rigorously insisted upon; Xenophon reveals that for an older man to be denied precedence in seating was thought sufficiently painful to be a punishment for the *τρέσαντες*, the alleged cowards whose enduring humiliation served to instruct the rest of the community.³² Xenophon also reports that the Spartans, contrary to what was usual in Greece,

mixed young and old at social gatherings, in an atmosphere that would promote the transmission of the old men's wisdom.³³ He portrays the Spartans as uniquely distrustful of their own young; at the age when a young person leaves childhood and becomes a youth, and in the other Greek communities is released from *paidagōgoi* and schoolteachers and left to his own devices, under the Lykourgan system the opposite is done. The Spartans recognize the intense wilfulness of that age, its particular tendency to commit *hybris* and its especially strong craving of pleasure; least leisure is allowed and the greatest number of strenuous activities is imposed.³⁴ Simonides described Sparta as 'man-taming' (δαμασίμβροτος); the mature men, of course, did the taming, the animals to be tamed were the young.³⁵

It is made clear at the start of the *Laws*, and repeatedly thereafter, that the three participants in the dialogue are elderly (625b).³⁶ In another early passage, after mentioning the Spartan restriction on political criticism by the young, the Athenian stranger states that there are no young people present, and suggests that the three, because of their old age (γῆρας), are permitted by the lawgiver to discuss the laws privately together (635a). This point about permission need not be seen as Platonic irony. For one thing, the philosopher makes some effort to show the Spartan interlocutor, Megillos, as acting in character. He is much more taciturn than his Cretan colleague;³⁷ his un-Spartan willingness to tolerate long speeches is carefully accounted for (642b–d, 721e–722a, 890b–891b); he claims precedence by virtue of his greater age (712c). Megillos may be expected, therefore, to show regard for Spartan rules about political discourse. The Athenian character states that the Spartan *gerousia*, employing the wise restraint of the elderly, was the contrivance of a man with a divine gift (691e–692a). Late in the work the three characters are described by the Athenian stranger as 'this *gerousia*' (905c).³⁸ Now, *γερονσία* were known from other Dorian states: in Crete, at Elis and Corinth.³⁹ But Sparta's *γερονσία* was seemingly the most prominent body of that name. It is also the one most clearly suggested by the present, Platonic,

context. We should not be surprised to find Spartan attitudes affecting Plato's treatment of youth and age.

What, according to the Athenian stranger, are the faults of the young, which help to make necessary the rule of the elderly? 'Of all wild things, the child is the most unmanageable...sharp and sly, the most unruly animal there is (πάντων θηρίων...δυσμεταχειριστότατον)', to be punished, on occasion, like a slave (808d-e). The young are subject to irrational enthusiasm; at 666a there is a warning against the manic temperament (έμμανή...έξιν) of the under-18s.⁴⁰ Young adults show lack of self-control (άκολασία) and indulge in *hybris*, most importantly towards religious sites (884). The instability of the young is of great importance.⁴¹ At 653a it is stated that wisdom and firm, correct opinions are things which even the old are lucky if they possess. Firmness of opinion in the rulers is necessary, of course, for the stability of their rule – the need for stability being insisted upon in the *Laws* (see below). The young are contrasted with the old in their perception of a cardinal principle; the former see 'very dimly', the latter 'very clearly', that rulers must be subject to the law (715d). The young are always such as to act irresponsibly if given supreme office (691c-d). The sexual order which the Athenian stranger lays down is threatened by 'the young man of excess, brimming with seed' (άνηρ σφοδρός και νέος, πολλοῦ σπέρματος μεστός) (839b). The young are described as liable to be persuaded that the gods and justice are things contrived, the products of convention (νόμοις) rather than of nature (φύσει); atheism in the *Laws* is perhaps the most important source of the revolution which the author dreads (889e-890a, cf. 891b). In contrast, correct theism is represented as sufficient to make a person always abstain from voluntary impious act and unlawful utterance (885b). The remonstrance addressed to the imagined typical atheist begins thus: 'You are young, my lad' (ὦ παῖ, νέος εἶ); there follow other references to the youth of the unbeliever (888a, 890a-b, 900c, 903b, 904e). No one, claims the Athenian stranger, has ever retained atheism from youth into old age (888b-c).

If Plato in this work 'harps on' about the virtues of old age, it is as part of an elaborate, at times explicit, comparison with youth. The young are found inferior to the old in the areas of religious duty, political stability and subordination of the authorities to law; these are areas in which Sparta was thought outstanding.⁴² In its claim that the young should submit to being hit by the elderly (879c, cf. 717d), the *Laws* may be contrasted with the *Republic*, in which (548b) Sparta is said disapprovingly to use violence (βλα) rather than persuasion to teach the young. Here, as in other matters, the *Laws* appears as the more pro-Spartan in its tone,⁴³ even though it contains, as we shall see, trenchant criticism of much in Spartan life. There is in the *Laws* an ambivalence towards the young which may itself reflect Lakonia. The young possess a quality of the utmost significance to the law-giver: 'you can convince the souls of the young of anything you try to' (663e–664a). Such impressionability is both dangerous and promising. At Sparta remarkable, institutionalized violence and deprivation were imposed on the young, and extraordinarily high targets were set for them. Spartan pride in local attainments did not lead to a serene optimism about the young. There was no myth of autochthony to encourage a faith in the security, and thus perhaps in the innate virtue, of the community; Sparta's folk memories were of migration, constitutional failure and reforms which were shaky at first, but ultimately triumphant.⁴⁴ Reality was plastic; Spartans were not born but made.

The fact that modern scholars are, with few exceptions, educators of the young, may cause them to be uncommonly aware of how education can change the individual. Plato's view of the plasticity of human nature, and his consequent emphasis on educational policy, may be more unusual by Greek standards than we readily see. He himself was self-conscious about it. In a remarkable passage of the *Laws* he may even joke against himself on this subject. He is aware, he indicates, that he may be accused of designing a city and citizens like someone dreaming or working wax (746a).⁴⁵ In classical Greece the potential of education was perhaps seen as demonstrated more by Sparta

than by Athens, When Perikles reportedly spoke of Athens as being a school (not *the* school; Thuc. II 41 1) of Hellas, it was in a context rich in conscious reactions to the Spartan model.⁴⁶ And although the word here translated as 'school', *παιδευσις*, is drawn from the education of children, Perikles is not claiming, explicitly at least, any special Athenian skill in shaping the child. Rather, his point is that Athenian men are a lesson to other adult Greeks. He may perhaps be seen as performing a propaganda trick familiar today;⁴⁷ using redefinition or metaphor to match a potent aspect of an opponent's case – in this instance, Sparta's reputation for moulding the young.

We must try to sketch briefly the role of gerontocracy in the *Laws*. The guardians of the laws, *νομοφύλακες*, are to be between 50 and 70 years old (755a–b). 'By far the most important' single official, the minister of education, is to be over 50 (765d–766b). The old, in this case people over 60 (671d–e, 812b–c),⁴⁸ are to control the choruses, music and drinking which will inculcate morality. The ten oldest of the guardians of the laws, with education ministers past and present, are to dominate the Nocturnal Council (951d–e, 952a, 961a), a body which, lodged on the *akropolis* (969b–c), protects the state (968a). Imports and exports are to be supervised by the twelve guardians of the laws who are next in age to the oldest five (847c). Some younger men, between 30 and 40 years of age (951e), also belong to this Council; they act as its senses, while the old men are its brain (964e–965a). The old are to be shown a general deference (879c – quoted below, p. 281, cf. 762e). Children are to be brought up to take pleasure and pain in the same things as the elderly (659d). The elderly are perhaps to have the privilege of criticising the laws, which Plato approves of in the case of the Spartans (634d–e). They are privileged, as we shall see below, in the matter of truth-telling; the old (most of them) must be told the truth by the young, but there appears to be no such obligation upon the old themselves. Scrutineers (*εὔθυνοι*, *εὔθυναί*), the supervisors of officials, are to be between 50 and 75 years old (946a, c). The scrutineers are 'the single most crucial factor

determining whether a state survives or disintegrates' (945c). They are priests (947a), as were the kings of Sparta (below, p. 290), and should be 'god-like', θεῖους (945c),⁴⁹ a word noted by Plato elsewhere as having Spartan overtones.⁵⁰ The lavish honours prescribed for the funerals of scrutineers (947b–e)⁵¹ recall the funerary honours, 'more suitable for heroes than men', which were given to the Spartan kings and which Herodotos found more barbarian than Hellenic.⁵² In election for the post of scrutineer, where the votes are tied the older candidate is preferred (946a). Judges in capital cases operate in order of age (κατὰ πρέσβιν) (855d–e). Matters affecting guardians and orphans are also to be ruled in this way, by the oldest of the guardians of the laws (924c, 926c).⁵³

One revealing approach to the position of old age in the *Laws* may be to consider the role of the element πρεσβ– ('old', 'senior') in the work. Leading officials of post-classical Sparta bore the title πρέσβεις, as we have seen. The element πρεσβ– occurred in early political texts of the Spartans. The rider to the 'Great Rhetra' states that τοὺς πρεσβυγενέας καὶ ἀρχαγέτας ('the elderly and the chiefs') should remove any erring proposal of the people.⁵⁴ Tyrtaios, in his poetic version, used the words πρεσβύτας.. γέροντας.⁵⁵ In the *Laws*, as in the *Republic*, πρεσβ– is used prominently, although only in the *Laws* is the superlative, πρεσβυτάτ–, used to emphasize the special virtues and offices of the very oldest.⁵⁶ A few examples from the *Laws* must suffice, of πρεσβ– in various forms. We read of τοὺς πρεσβυτάτους τε καὶ ἀρίστους εἰς δύναμιν ('those oldest and most suited to power') (754c);⁵⁷ ὅσω πρεσβύτερος καὶ σωφρονέστερος γίγνεται ('the older and more self-controlled he becomes') (665e); πᾶς ἡμῖν αἰδέσθω τὸν ἑαυτοῦ πρεσβύτερον ἔργῳ τε καὶ ᾗπει. ('Everyone in our city should defer, in action and speech, to the opinion of his elder.') (879c). Plato gives in the *Laws* an argument for the priority of the soul to the body. Within it, the priority is repeatedly expressed by the element πρεσβ–; soul is πρεσβύτερα than body (892a–c).⁵⁸ With this priority are closely associated power and divinity (966d–e, 967d).⁵⁹ Here, it may seem, Ionian metaphysics meet Dorian ethics.

P. Roussel, in his study of the privileges of old age in the Greek world, notices Plato's tendency towards gerontocracy in the *Laws*.⁶⁰ In seeking to account for it, he observes that the Spartans maintained 'la religion de l'âge' but he appears to give less weight to Spartan than to Pythagorean influence upon Plato in this matter.⁶¹ However, it is clear that Pythagoreanism was itself much influenced by Spartan practices. (Pythagorean doctrine has sometimes been seen as 'specifically Dorian' in inspiration,⁶² in spite of the Ionian origin of Pythagoras himself; there was a tale of Pythagoras visiting Sparta to study its laws.)⁶³ Pythagoreans seemingly distinguished schematically between the functions proper for different age-groups, seeing consideration of politics and the exercise of justice as belonging to the old.⁶⁴ They reportedly had meals in common (the term *συσσίτια* is preserved, one familiar from Spartan contexts),⁶⁵ and used a word (*κατάρτισις*) perhaps suggestive of animal-taming for the disciplining of the young.⁶⁶ This taming is described as achieved, to some extent at least, by music; on Spartan and Platonic use of music in education, see below. In a fragment attributed to the Pythagorean Arkhytas, it is stated that the good of the *polis* is an end in itself; that the behaviour of citizens should be thoroughly infused with the laws; that stability requires the same officials to be at once commanding and commanded, 'as happens in the well-regulated city of Sparta'.⁶⁷ Resemblances between Pythagorean and Spartan ideals have been collected by Ollier.⁶⁸ Where Plato converges with Pythagorean sources in apparent admiration of particular practices characteristic of Sparta, how far need that convergence be put down to Pythagorean influence? Plato elsewhere shows signs of such influence.⁶⁹ But information about, and commendation of, Spartan practices came to him through numerous channels; here Pythagoreanism was at most one influence among many.⁷⁰ The matter is complicated in two further ways. Pythagorean material cited above as reminiscent of Sparta comes from, or was fathered upon, Arkhytas and Aristoxenos, writers from Taras – a Spartan colony, though not under the Lykourgan rule. Were they perhaps untypical of

Pythagoreanism in the degree of their enthusiasms for Sparta? Also, Arkhytas seems to have been a personal friend of Plato; Aristoxenos is recorded as a pupil of Aristotle.⁷¹ If there was influence between Pythagoreans and Plato on the subject of Sparta and the elderly, may it not have been Plato who did the persuading?

The following belief is prescribed at *Laws* 879b–c: among the gods and those human beings who are likely to survive and prosper the older is far senior in status to the younger (τὸ πρεσβύτερον...οὐ σμικρῷ τοῦ νεωτέρου ἐστὶ πρεσβευόμενον).⁷² The repetition of the verbal stem is surely deliberate; cf. 718a, where *πρεσβεύειν* is used of honouring dead parents, and 717b, where obligations to parents are *πρεσβύτατα*. That words from the root *πρεσβ*– had the meaning ‘give priority’ or ‘deserving priority’ might suggest that Greeks of the respected past associated high status with age often enough to generate an element of language, or even that the verbal coincidence was divinely contrived. Comparable is Plato’s etymological argument for his proposal to regulate song by law: he points out that one word for ‘songs’ is identical with the word for ‘laws’ – νόμοι, and floats the idea that the insight of an ancient diviner was responsible for the fact (799e–800a).⁷³ Plato’s etymological history may be, like his political history, opportunistic.⁷⁴ It may just help to understand both if we compare them with Spartan practice. Platonic and Spartan treatment of political history will be considered below. Etymological play may seem more likely to have been familiar among word-loving, improvising Athenians than among Spartans. But we should consider the ‘Great Rhetra’, a text which was probably familiar to all of Sparta’s citizens. The Rhetra contains word-play, in the phrase *φυλὰς φυλάξαντα καὶ ὠβάς ὠβάξαντα*.⁷⁵ This is commonly translated as ‘having tribed the tribes and obed the obes’, or the like – i.e. having established each of those divisions within Sparta. We have sometimes been assured that the first verb here is not from the common *φυλάσσω* (‘guard’), which would make regular grammar and fair sense, but instead is, like its companion participle *ὠβάξαντα*, a rare

coinage based on the corresponding noun.⁷⁶ This approximates to the truth, but sets up a false opposition. The Greek audience of this text, and in particular individuals at their first hearing of it, would surely understand the familiar φυλάσσω momentarily, before the second participle encouraged them to construct, by analogy, a verb φυλάζω. Thereafter they could be expected to hear, in this text, both φυλ- verbs at once. The effect of the association of the noun 'tribe' and the verb 'guard' would be to encourage the idea that the tribes were inherently connected with the (eminently Spartan) concepts of guarding and preservation. Here, then, is a phrase suggestive of opportunistic etymology, using repetition of a single element in words of different endings, occurring in a prominent context, and carrying a politically conservative message. Plato's play on πρεσβ- need not have been alien to Spartans.⁷⁷

Deceit

A technique of control allied with gerontocracy in the *Laws* is deceit. Before looking at the text in detail, a glance at Spartan (and Athenian) practice may be helpful. Spartan official deceit included not only lying to helots as to whether they would be rewarded or killed, and misleading other enemies in wartime (a practice which Xenophon commended explicitly to non-Spartans), but also lying to their own citizens about the outcome of battles involving Spartan forces.⁷⁸ This last form of deceit, recorded twice, suggests that Spartans were expected not to object strongly to being so misled, for the unpleasant truth would predictably emerge before long. The tales of how the traitors Pausanias and Kinadon were trapped by the Spartan authorities both involve detail of elaborate practical deception: Pausanias was lured to a hut where hidden ephors could hear him compromise himself;⁷⁹ Kinadon was enticed away from Sparta on the pretence of an official errand.⁸⁰ Deceit was cognate with the general Spartan secrecy which Thucydides found

remarkable;⁸¹ for Spartans to deprive each other of the truth was a conscious institution if Plutarch is right in reporting a slogan uttered by the eldest in Spartan messes: 'no word goes beyond those doors'.⁸² According to a late source again, the right to lie was seen by Spartans as a badge of status: 'When someone accused a Spartan of lying, he replied, "That's right. We are free men. But if anyone else does not tell the truth, he will live to regret it"'.⁸³ That Athenian public opinion contained an image of Spartans as liars is hardly decisive as evidence;⁸⁴ it may, however, help us presently to understand Platonic treatment of deceit in the *Laws*. At Athens there was no shortage of public lies, as students of the orators will testify. But the Athenian law against deceiving the *dēmos* reminds us of the danger that lay in conspiring – with several potential witnesses against one – to mislead the sovereign body.⁸⁵ In contrast to Sparta's tight oligarchic structures, the vast membership of the ruling assembly at Athens made it difficult to mislead even foreigners, by secret diplomacy.⁸⁶ What distinguishes Sparta is not self-interested mendacity by ambitious individuals, but high-minded, often elaborate, official conspiracy: deceit for a good end, to borrow a phrase from the *Laws* (663d). When Alkibiades pretended to conspire with Spartan envoys, he was acting in a private capacity; when those envoys, as Alkibiades predicted, sought to mislead the Athenian assembly, they acted collectively, as an agency of the Spartan state.⁸⁷

The idea of desirable deceit is famously present in the *Republic*. The 'noble lie' (γενναῖον τι ἐν ψευδομένους) concerns a myth. Subjects of the ideal state are to believe it; it would be best if the rulers did too, though this may not be possible (414b–c). The 'noble lie' contains a fictitious oracle (415c), a point to which we shall return. The falsity of the 'noble lie' is emphasized. The *Republic* is similarly frank in describing how the young will be allowed to breed: 'it looks as if the rulers here will need to use, for the benefit of the ruled, frequent falsehood and deceit' (συχνῶ τῷ ψεύδει καὶ τῇ ἀπάτῃ) (459c). Speaking more generally, elsewhere in the *Republic*, Plato vigorously condemns lying by

subjects to their rulers, but explicitly suggests that it is proper for rulers to use deliberate falsehood in the interests of the city, falsehood for the consumption both of external enemies and of the citizens themselves (389b–d).

In the *Laws* the treatment of lying is rather different. In one passage, to be sure, there is an explicit assertion of its value, emphasized by repetition. The Athenian stranger defends the doctrine that the virtuous life is more pleasant than the unjust life. The doctrine is true, he claims, but even if it were not true, ‘if a lawgiver of any value...had ventured to lie about anything to the young, for a good end, is there any lie he would ever have uttered (ψεῦδος...ἂν ἐψεύσατο) which would have been more profitable than this one, and more able to bring about the voluntary (rather than enforced) performance of all just actions?’ (663d–e). This may be considered a clear hint, but on the surface the Athenian stranger does not here require his interlocutors to assent to actual mendacity; the doctrine is declared true. Where lying is inescapably involved, the author of the *Laws* does not confront it with the plainness of the *Republic*. At 634d–e the Athenian stranger commends the practice whereby the young are forbidden to criticize laws, and everyone says in unison⁸⁸ that everything is well (καλῶς) established, as laid down by the gods. The insincerity of this is suggested immediately with detail from the Cretan interlocutor, accepted without demur by the Athenian, of how the good divine arrangement may properly be criticized by old men; they may identify what is *not* well established (τι τῶν μὴ καλῶν) (634e–635b). But there is no explicit reference to falsehood.

There may seem to be a clear dramatic reason why Plato does not emphasize the mendacity of this communal praise of the laws; the Athenian stranger is describing the practice of Sparta and Crete, the homes of the interlocutors. However, the lack of explicit commendation for actual untruth is maintained throughout the work. At 916d–917b lying and deceit are discussed in connection with market-trading, and this gives rise to general considerations. The Athenian says that most people

think lies and deceit are often justified, in certain circumstances (ἐν καιρῷ). He rejects this popular view *because it leaves the circumstances undefined*. The definition he offers is in negative form. There must be no deceit, verbal or practical, carried out by one who invokes divinity, on pain of being utterly loathsome to the gods (θεομισέστατος). A person loathsome in this way is above all one who 'swears false oaths with no regard for the gods, and secondly whoever lies in the presence of [human] superiors'. These superiors are then listed as 'the good in relation to the bad, the old, in general, in relation to the young, and therefore parents in relation to their offspring, men in relation to women and children, rulers in relation to the ruled'. Especially deserving of respect in this way are officials of the city. In spite of the Athenian stranger's emphatic words about the need for the lawgiver to give a definition in this matter, nothing is said here to define as improper the deceiving of inferiors by superiors. This silence should hardly be put down to carelessness on Plato's part. The permissibility of deceiving inferiors is scarcely less clear than in the *Republic*. But here it is left implicit.

Applications of religion

Reticence about lying in the *Laws* may be seen also in the treatment of numerous fictions in the sphere of religion. Plato in this work often buttresses his proposed arrangements by appealing to religious authority. (At 811c he claims a certain divine inspiration for the whole book.) The Athenian stranger says,

When the legislator wants to tame one of the desires that dominate mankind... He must try to make everyone...believe that this common opinion [disapproval of the desire] has the backing of religion. He couldn't put his law on a securer foundation than that. ...if the rule is given sufficient religious backing, it will get a grip on every soul and intimidate it into obeying the established laws (838d–e; 839c).⁸⁹

Plato's normal manner of assigning holiness in the *Laws* is not to demonstrate carefully that a particular arrangement falls under some category of the divine will. Rather, divinity tends to be invoked briefly, as a device to compel the obedience of subjects.⁹⁰ At no point in the *Laws* does Plato make explicit that any invocation of religion is a pragmatic fiction; contrast the *Republic*, where part of the 'noble lie' is an invented oracle (415c). However, it may seem that indifference to the truth of certain recommended religious beliefs is clearly hinted at. The Athenian stranger states that someone founding, or refounding, a city

if he has any sense, will never dream of altering whatever instructions may have been received from Delphi or Dodona or Ammon about the gods and temples that ought to be founded by the various groups in the state, and the gods or spirits after whom the temples should be named. Alternatively, such details may have been suggested by stories told long ago of visions or divine inspiration, which somehow moved people to institute sacrifices with their rituals – either native or taken from Etruria or Cyprus or *anywhere else at all...* The legislator must not tamper with any of this in the slightest detail (738b–c).⁹¹

This firm and sweeping endorsement of remote tales of visions and of divine inspiration should be compared with Plato's contempt for 'the so-called diviners' of his own experience who, in one matter at least, can be relied upon to give wrong advice (913b). Some diviners are to be tolerated in his ideal state (828b, 871c–d),⁹² but many diviners are in fact cunning atheists; he connects them with other groups despised by himself – tyrants, demagogues and sophists – and says that they should be put to death (908c–e). Why, then, the broad acceptance of divination from bygone ages? Did Plato perhaps understand that there was a test of time, so that, if divination endured, it was of the authentic kind? This line of defence hardly seems available. Elsewhere in the *Laws*, as in the *Republic*, Plato indicates that seriously incorrect myths about the gods have been handed

down (see below, p. 300). In choosing whether to accept a particular myth, Plato's criterion has often seemed to be, whether it would promote good or bad human behaviour. A similar pragmatism may lie behind his use of old divination. Ancestral structures backed by time-honoured divination conduce to conservatism and obedience to gerontocrats.

There is another application of religion when the Athenian stranger argues that changes in children's play, and in musical representations of character, lead to political and moral instability (798a–800a). As a means of preserving public dance and song from change, he proposes sanctifying the whole lot (799a: καθιερώσαι);⁹³ innovators may then be charged with impiety (799b). No one should make any utterance in song or any movement in dance other than those officially prescribed (800a). Elsewhere the Athenian proposes to express all his ideals in song (664b); the effect of the sanctification of music may therefore be to make the charge of impiety applicable to all political innovation.⁹⁴

How does this role of religion in politics compare with Spartan practice? The contrivance whereby all political arrangements are officially declared to be good and divinely established, even while an elite quietly seeks to reform them, is declared to be Spartan (634d–e). On the first page of the *Laws* Megillos confirms that the Spartans claim Apollo as the author of their νόμοι (624a).⁹⁵ There was, however, a tradition that the initiative in creating Sparta's laws had not been entirely Apollo's. According to Xenophon, Lykourgos, before delivering the laws to the people of Sparta, went to Delphoi in company with 'the most powerful' of the Spartans, and asked whether it would be well for Sparta to obey laws which he himself gave. Xenophon gives as his personal opinion that this procedure was one of the finest of Lykourgos' many fine contrivances (μηχανημάτων) for making his fellow citizens wish to obey the laws; Lykourgos thus enacted it, writes Xenophon, that disobedience to these laws with their Delphic authority was not only illegal but impious (ἀνόσιον).⁹⁶ Spartan practice of religion appears to have impressed other

Greeks as unusually acceptable to the gods rather than as unusually hypocritical (above, n. 42). Pritchett and other scholars have well stressed the conspicuous, and in narrowly secular terms wasteful, way in which Spartan military campaigns were aborted or diverted to comply with divination.⁹⁷ But an acute analyst of power, such as Plato, might perceive in Sparta a collocation of political and religious authority which was unfamiliar at Athens and tempting in its potency. Spartan kings, honoured as descendants of Zeus and as superhuman, were secular authorities of great power on campaign and of much influence at home.⁹⁸ The kings were priests, who sacrificed on behalf of the city.⁹⁹ They had a general authority in matters of religion.¹⁰⁰ They were official custodians of oracles from Delphoi; they appointed, and shared a tent with, the *Pythioi*, men who consulted Delphoi on state business.¹⁰¹ This not only helped in the construction of politically convenient interpretations and in the suppression of awkward oracles; it also might encourage a king to intervene in the very creation of an oracular response. On one occasion Sparta sought to corral the Delphic oracle into giving a particular response on the validity of a truce, by asking whether Apollo agreed with his father on the subject – a favourable sign having already been given by Zeus at Olympia.¹⁰² The Spartan official recorded as having gone first to Olympia then to Delphoi to put the questions was King Agesipolis. He was leader-designate of the expedition which might act on Delphoi's answer. King Pleistoanax was accused by Spartans of having corrupted the Delphic priestess for his own political ends.¹⁰³ Lysandros tried to corrupt Delphoi, Dodone and Ammon, according to Ephoros.¹⁰⁴ The Spartan ephors were empowered once every nine years to act as watchers of the heavens, looking for a signal from the gods that a king should be removed.¹⁰⁵

The question whether Spartan authorities often *consciously* manipulated divination for their political ends is difficult. A tendency on the part of strong-willed people, used to power, to conflate their own wishes with those of divinity is observable

widely. It was particularly clear in nineteenth-century England, where it was depicted by George Eliot in the character of Bulstrode, the banker in *Middlemarch*. Gladstone ascribed to divine providence signs of progress in his political ventures.¹⁰⁶ Florence Nightingale wrote, in a private note to herself, 'I *must* remember God is not my private secretary', suggesting that even in a person of great intelligence and honesty self-awareness in this matter may be intermittent. She combined the giving of orders to God with obedience to a call from God.¹⁰⁷ Spartans trained to command and be commanded may conceivably have acquired an attitude to divinity which was similarly two-edged. That their education guided them away from self-criticism¹⁰⁸ might help them to manipulate religion unself-consciously, without the inhibitions of Miss Nightingale. A Spartan who rose to power after decades of obedience might find it hard to accept that there was no longer any higher authority to bear responsibility for decisions; as Hodkinson¹⁰⁹ and Parker¹¹⁰ have suggested, divine authority may have met at Sparta an unusually strong psychological need. On the other hand, Spartans could conceive of their own authorities consciously manipulating divination on occasion, as the charge against King Pleistoanax shows. An Athenian, such as Plato, might exaggerate the extent of conscious religious pragmatism at Sparta. But the mistake, if mistake it would have been, seems eminently pardonable.

If indeed Plato in the *Laws* does less than in the *Republic* to call attention to the deliberate falsehoods among his proposals, how might that be explained? The tentative suggestion is developed below (pp. 308–12) that Plato hoped *some* of those who read or heard about the *Laws* would be Spartans. To anticipate that suggestion for a moment: Plato could reckon that Spartans would be readier than others to pick up, and accept without much argument, hints about the necessity of falsehood. It would be the more thoroughly philosophic audience of the *Republic* which would be the more shocked by the 'noble lie', and thus more in need of a show of hesitation such as precedes, and calls attention to, that particular falsehood. The audience of the

Republic would also be less familiar with the kind of deception involved in the arrangements for breeding, and thus more in need of the explicit confirmation that falsehood was to be used.

No less important might be the sensitivity of Spartans about their image abroad, and a concern in particular about how they were portrayed in a work which might be read in many parts of Greece. Evidence will be presented below to the effect that Plato in the *Laws* went to great lengths to spare the feelings of Spartans (or perhaps of Lakonizers). The image of Spartans as deceitful could be the more damaging as it gained in currency and persuasiveness, because deception was an important part of Spartan statecraft and might be undermined by publicity. The more clearly Spartan in inspiration were the proposals in the *Laws*, the less might any Spartans among Plato's audience welcome explicit recommendation of deceit.

Story-telling

A distinctive feature of the *Laws* is the extensive use of history, or pseudo-history. This topic has been usefully studied by Weil, who notes that precise references in the work to non-Greek history exceed those in the *Republic* by something of the order of 22:6; in references to Athenian history the ratio is some 5:1.¹¹¹ Three of the historical subjects treated in the *Laws* may be of special relevance to the present study: the failure of the early Dorian alliance, education in the ruling circles of Persia and Athenian reaction to the thalassocracy of Minos. First, however, some brief observations on the use by Spartans of stories about their own past; that Plato was aware of such stories is shown by his reference to exhaustive Spartan myth-telling about the early Dorians (682e).

Aristotle in the *Rhetoric* links story-telling (τὸ μυθολογεῖν) with the utterance of maxims (τὸ...γνωμολογεῖν); both, he writes, are suitable devices of rhetoric only for older men with relevant experience.¹¹² In the previous sentence he had mentioned

Lakonian apophthegms; did he perhaps see the two forms of persuasion as characteristic of the Spartan gerontocracy? Much of our information about Sparta, from Herodotos, Thucydides and Xenophon, takes the form of tales about historical individuals. The intended effect of most of these stories was apparently to condemn the memory of a miscreant. Herodotos tells of the downfall of the deviants Kleomenes, Leotykhidas, Pantites and Aristodamos, the two alleged *τρέσαντες* who survived Thermopylai.¹¹³ What has been described as 'perhaps the most awe-inspiring cautionary tale in Herodotus' is about a Spartiate, Glaukos, whose family died out after he put a corrupt question to the Delphic oracle; the story in Herodotos' account is told by a Spartan king, and introduced as one which 'we Spartiates tell'.¹¹⁴ Thucydides has a story, famously uncharacteristic in its anecdotal colour, about the disgrace and death of Pausanias.¹¹⁵ The similarly graphic and problematic tale of the fall of the Athenian Themistokles occurs in the same context and likewise reveals hostility of the Spartan authorities towards its central figure.¹¹⁶ An extraordinary concentration of valuable information about Sparta is to be found in Xenophon's story of the failed conspiracy of Kinadon.¹¹⁷ There is detail from Xenophon of the brave, or foolhardy, death of the bold but insubordinate Spartan officer Phoibidas.¹¹⁸ Unambiguously positive in its implicit moralizing is the account carried by Xenophon of the loyal, unnamed boyfriend of Anaxibios, who, with the latter and some dozen Spartan harmosts, chose to stand his ground and die rather than to flee.¹¹⁹ These circumstantial anecdotes, with their moral extremes and satisfying closure in death or disgrace, should be compared with the brief accounts by Xenophon and Plutarch of what Spartans talked and sang about. 'It is the local practice', writes Xenophon, 'to discuss in the messes whatever good acts have been done in the city'.¹²⁰ According to Plutarch, Spartan boys were asked to identify good or notorious individuals. It should be noticed that in none of the four phrases used by Plutarch to report these questions is there a verb to show, by its tense, whether living or dead people were meant.¹²¹ Spartan

songs, according to Plutarch, were on serious and character-forming (ἡθοιοῖς) themes; they dealt especially with the good fortune of those who had died for Sparta, and with the wretched, painful lives of the τρέσαντες.¹²² The ethical preoccupation of Spartan song may be echoed in the section of the *Laws* where Plato assigns a function to those who are too old to sing; they are to become 'storytellers (μυθολόγους) about the same moral characters (ἡθῶν)' (664d) – the same, that is, as the choruses of younger people are to sing about.

The focus at Sparta on dead individuals reflected a standing problem for this most intense of oligarchies. Oligarchy bred jealousy and abhorred the too-prominent individual.¹²³ The rules of Sparta were to be above even the grandest. The prominent individual threatened conspicuous breach of the rules, austere as these were. The words with which Thucydides ends his paired stories of Pausanias and Themistokles may be read as an implicit Spartiate sermon: 'Such were the ends [in disgraceful death and in exile respectively] of Pausanias and Themistokles...the most outstanding Greeks of their time.'¹²⁴ And yet to praise or blame individuals in brief narrative is an extraordinarily effective way of transmitting social values. Sparta's solution to the problem of how to praise individuals without raising up threatening grandees may well have been to concentrate on the dead. There is a famously narrow role for poetry proposed in Book 10 of the *Republic*: it is to hymn the gods and to praise good men (607a). In the *Laws* the role may be narrower still, in spirit more Lakonian:

deceased citizens who by their physical efforts or force of personality have conspicuous and strenuous achievements to their credit, and who have lived a life of obedience to the laws, should be regarded as proper subjects for our panegyrics... But to honour a man with hymns and panegyrics during his lifetime is to invite trouble (801e–802a).¹²⁵

References to the remote past in the *Laws* often form tendentious tales. These are not presented as salutary fiction to

persuade citizens of the ideal state; they are not, therefore, in this respect quite like the myth of the metals, the 'noble lie' of the *Republic*. But by pointed use of words from the root $\mu\alpha\upsilon\tau$ –Plato suggests that on occasion guesswork is involved (694c, concerning Persia). The Athenian stranger tells of the failure of the ancient Dorian alliance, in spite of its superb military potential (683–92). The cause of the failure was not lack of courage or any ignorance of warfare on the part of those who commanded and were commanded (688c). Rather, the alliance collapsed above all because of ignorance ($\alpha\mu\alpha\theta\lambda\iota\alpha$), in the states other than Sparta, of the most important aspects of human affairs. The ignorance consisted partly of people's shunning what they admired (689a–b). There was a destructive desire for more than the rules allowed; kings were at fault, in pursuing luxury (691a). This mode of failure is relevant now, and in the future, the Athenian insists (688c–e, 693a). Relevant to whom? A superficial reading may be flattering to Spartans; Sparta was the only state of the ancient alliance that did not swiftly become corrupt (685a, 686a, 691d–692a). But we recall the explicit criticism of Sparta early in the work, for neglecting non-military virtues; indeed Plato reminds his readers of it in this context (688a–c). That Spartans in the early 4th century broke their state's rules, pursuing treasure and luxury, was accepted by contemporaries, even those, such as Plato, with considerable respect for Sparta.¹²⁶

The Athenian goes on to tell a tale of the partial failure of the old Persian system of education, as it applied to the ruling group. The Persians used to have a rigorous form of upbringing; it produced strong men who could live in the open, go without sleep and campaign as soldiers when necessary (695a). However, in royal circles the rigour declined; there was an access of money; kings spent so long away at war that education fell into the hands of newly-rich women, who spoiled the future rulers (694d–e, 695a–b, d–e). Now, Persia is not a frequent focus of attention in the *Laws*. And, as Weil pointed out, comparison with other Greek writings on Persia raises suspicion about the accuracy of Plato's account. That Cyrus allowed the education of

his children to be spoiled, and that Darius made a similar mistake with the education of Xerxes, are Platonic claims unsupported elsewhere. More likely, observes Weil, this picture reflects invention by Plato on a theme dear to him: the production of the tyrannic soul.¹²⁷ In phrases which may be even more significant than their author realised, Weil wrote: 'L'explication historique tire ici sa force de la répétition et de la symétrie... Ici Platon nous offre une incantation plutôt qu'une enquête.'¹²⁸ A clue to Plato's general purpose in composing this Persian section lies in the fact, perceived but not fully exploited by Weil,¹²⁹ that several of the elements which here characterise Persia elsewhere apply to Sparta. (In the doubtfully-Platonic *First Alkibiades* the two states are compared.)¹³⁰ Sparta was herself accused by Plato in the *Republic* of materialism and luxury, as we have seen. Aristotle criticized Sparta for allowing administrative matters to fall into the hands of women.¹³¹

Any doubt as to the ultimate target of Plato's criticism in this Persian section may seem to be dispelled by the apostrophe which it contains: ὦ Λακεδαιμόνιοι (696a). The same apostrophe of Sparta had been used at the start of the section on early Dorian history (682e). However, in the Persian section, as in the Dorian section, there is material which, at first sight, appears to protect Sparta from criticism. To quote Saunders' translation:

in all fairness, my Spartan friends, one must give your state credit for at least this much [τοῦτό γε]: rich man, poor man, commoner and king are held in honour to the same degree and are educated in the same way [τιμὴν καὶ τροφὴν νέμετε], without privilege, except as determined by...supernatural instructions (696a).¹³²

This may seem difficult to square with the remarks in the *Republic* on Spartan regard for wealth. However, the words 'man' and 'king' in Saunders' version are not exactly represented in the Greek. Rather Plato uses abstracts, 'poverty and wealth, laity and royalty' (πενία καὶ πλοῦτος καὶ ἰδιωτεία καὶ βασιλεία). May it be that he has in mind, in this educational context, not so much

the actual men as the potential men: in fact, boys? 'Honour' and 'education' go more closely together in the Greek than they do in Saunders' translation; rather than the honour being assigned to adults and the education to boys, it may be the boys who are understood as receiving both. On this interpretation, Plato's position may be the coherent one of believing that materialism has corrupted other elements of Spartan life, but not yet the education of the young. The philosopher is unlikely to have believed that the Spartan *agōgē* would remain uncorrupted for long in the presence of materialism among Spartan men. If the education system was still sound, a warning about its future was surely called for, especially as other conditions which, according to Plato, helped to corrupt the education of Persians also existed in fourth-century Sparta. Plato mentions elsewhere in the *Laws* (806c, cf. 637c) unruly luxury practised by Spartan women. The absence abroad of Spartan men, during the imperial decades of the early fourth century, must have been clear to any intelligent observer; such absence, at a much earlier period, is in fact mentioned by Aristotle as a plausible cause of the freedom allowed to Spartan women.¹³³ The education of Persian kings can be seen as having supplied Plato with a conveniently remote and plastic example, one well adapted to the Spartan taste for stories of delinquency and fall involving eminent individuals.

Since the moral derived from the account of Persia can be easily applied to Sparta, it should be asked whether the account was not meant as a transparent allegory. The answer to this appears to be given by an element which is markedly un-Spartan, the role of eunuchs in the upbringing of Persian aristocrats (695a). That Plato meant the Persian account to imply a warning to Sparta is confirmed by the sequel. Megillos, exceptionally, takes the place of the Cretan Kleinias as the main interlocutor (696b). (Megillos has a similar role in the account of the ancient Dorian alliance; 682e–688e, 691b–d.) He is subjected, still with overt reference to Persia, to interrogation on lines familiar to fourth-century critics of Sparta; the single virtue of physical courage, it is put to him, is not enough (696b);¹³⁴ nor

should a state value wealth above the objects of high morality (696b, 697a–b, 697e–698a). An imperial power should not attack friendly nations (697d); compare the strong criticism, by the Lakonizer Xenophon, of Sparta's seizure of Thebes,¹³⁵ at a time when there were poor relations but a formal peace between the two states. The continuing reference to Persia allows Megillos to end this fraught section with emphatic agreement (698a).

Pseudo-history or myth contributes importantly in the matter of tact. The delicacy of the Athenian stranger has been remarked on by scholars; in Weil's phrase, 'La plus extrême politesse préside aux rapports des trois interlocuteurs.'¹³⁶ But there are exceptions: 666e–667a, 806c.¹³⁷ And early in the work there is clear and sustained criticism of Sparta: for overemphasizing war and physical courage (626b–631a); for weakness in the face of pleasure (633c–636e); for an incorrect attitude towards drunkenness (636e–650b, 671a–674c). In the light of the occasional hard word, and in particular of this opening barrage, Plato may perhaps have felt that, where possible, Sparta should be warned indirectly, gently, by means of non-Spartan examples. Compare 953d–e, where the Athenian stranger rejects the practice of expelling foreigners. His word for this process, *ξενιασίας*, was overwhelmingly Spartan in its associations, but he names here, as an example of a community using the practice, only the Egyptians. In the same context, the Athenian rejects the use of repulsive food to drive away strangers; again the clear reference to Sparta's notorious broth is left implicit (953e).

A reference in the *Laws* to the thalassocracy of Minos may also be part of this gentler criticism of imperial Sparta. At 706a the Athenian stranger is enlarging on his idea that it may be a bad thing to imitate one's enemies; such undesirable imitation happens, he says, 'when one lives next to the sea, and is damaged by enemies, as, for example – I speak now in a desire to avoid any recrimination (*μνησικακεῖν*) against you. There was a time when Minos, with his great sea-power, obliged the inhabitants of

Attike to pay an onerous tribute.' The self-interruption here is unusual, by the standard of this uncolloquial dialogue. Is there a suggestion that the Athenian is suppressing his first thoughts, to avoid the appearance of recrimination? Was there an example less remote than the Minoan; one which was so obvious, in fact, that readers might have supplied it for themselves (as the Athenian's pointed self-interruption invited them to do), and which might plausibly have been suppressed to avoid the appearance of recrimination? Sparta's brief and unhappy attempt to replace Athens as a naval power from the end of the fifth century would satisfy all these conditions. Sparta's territory adjoined the sea, and had been damaged by Athenian naval raids – the two conditions which Plato initially defined.¹³⁸

Myths about the gods are to be employed, selectively, by the citizens of Plato's state. Certain Greeks who refused to believe in the gods are described by the Athenian stranger as inevitable objects of hatred, for perversely disbelieving 'the myths which from their earliest childhood, when at the breast, they heard from their nurses and mothers' (887c–d). This may surprise. Wet-nurses and mothers are not normally treated by Platonic characters as reliable informants on difficult subjects. When, in Book I of the *Republic*, Thrasymakhos goadingly asks, 'Do you have a wet-nurse, Sokrates?', the latter does not see this as the opportunity for a triumphant paradox (343a). Indeed, derogatory remarks made in Plato's works about the opinions of women might form a substantial footnote to women's history. In the present work he advises against 'harbouring bitter feelings, on and on, in the female style (γυναικείως)' (731d), and decries 'curses and mutual verbal abuse, like that of women' (934e–935a). *Republic* 549d–e tells of sons mentally corrupted by their mothers who use 'all the various accusations with which wives drone on...'. At *Republic* 350e Thrasymakhos speaks sneeringly of 'old women telling the myths', who are merely to be humoured. Later in that work (381e) Sokrates himself criticizes mothers for misleading their little children – with bad theology, with tales of gods roaming in disguise at night (381e).¹³⁹

The intense language with which the Athenian stranger speaks of the rejection of young wives' tales may be partly understood by recalling the opinions of his elderly interlocutors. The atheists have offended against the principle of subordination to those senior in age; having mentioned the stories of nurses and mothers, the Athenian goes on to mention, as further educational experiences from which the atheists have failed to profit, the prayers of parents and the devotions of other adults. Also, religion is presented in the *Laws* as a mainstay of earthly authority.¹⁴⁰ The Cretan Kleinias says that to make a persuasive case for the existence of the gods, divine respecters of justice, 'would constitute just about the best and finest preamble our penal code could have' (887b–c). In the *Laws* the Sokratic paradox may be compromised;¹⁴¹ it is suggested that people do sometimes sin willingly – where the would-be sinner is restrained, it is in some cases by the fear which arises from correct theology. The gods are not indifferent to human transgressions, nor can they be bribed into forgiveness by sacrifices (885b).¹⁴² The Athenian stranger is shortly to advise a great effort of restraint in the face of the atheist, who is to be elaborately and gently persuaded – for a time (888 ff.; contrast 907d–909a on the fate of the confirmed atheist). To persuade his audience that he was not soft on atheists, as well as to vent his own indignation against those who threatened the foundations of his system, Plato may well have judged it useful to make an unusually sweeping statement against them as a preliminary.

That the author of the *Laws* does not in fact believe in the accuracy of lay people as sources for theology becomes clear when in this work, as in the *Republic*, he confronts the problem that some current myths are morally unsuitable. There are erroneous myth-tellers, the Athenian stranger concedes (*Laws* 941b, cf. 636c–d); their fault consists in representing gods as committing theft by means of trickery or violence. They are to be disbelieved. The defence given for this awkward concession is that the lawgiver is likely to know these matters better than all the poets (941b–c). This brusque remark should not be seen as

exhausting Plato's logical resources in the matter. Some audiences may be best pleased by the high-handed dismissal of a difficult objection. (We may recall how the chameleon-like Alkibiades briefly dismissed democracy as 'agreed folly' – in front of a Spartan audience.)¹⁴³ In the *Republic* Plato pays more attention to the principles on which myths are to be accepted or rejected. His procedure even there has struck many observers as pragmatic; in holding that myths about divinity are to be judged according to whether they cohere with the philosopher's ideas of morality, he has not made sufficiently clear why he believes that divinity must conform to the latter.¹⁴⁴ Religion appears normally to have proceeded, in its creative theorists, from human morality to metaphysics rather than the reverse.¹⁴⁵ But when, in the *Republic*, Plato uses human morality as a criterion in theology, readers inevitably suspect that the religious myths which survive criticism are, for Plato, untrue in the literal sense, like the frankly fictional myth of the metals, which is put forward for its political usefulness.¹⁴⁶

In the *Republic*, a few explicit assumptions are used to test religious myth: that gods are wholly good, do not change and do not deceive; myths which contradict these principles are to be rejected (379b–383c). The emphasis on changelessness may perhaps connect with Plato's concern in the *Republic* with the processes of malignant change in city-states. In the *Laws*, too, there is a lively interest in the analysis of political change¹⁴⁷ and in preventing citizens of the ideal state from expecting political change.¹⁴⁸ The two works also share an assertion, explicit or implicit, of the right of rulers to lie to their subjects. This may, paradoxically, help to explain why both works vigorously deny the traditional belief that the gods deceive. Such a belief, about divine rulers, might reflect on their worldly counterparts, reducing their credit. Also, the idea of gods as deceivers would encourage human subjects to lie to their human rulers (cf. 941b), an offence which Plato warns against.

Persuasion by repetition

Repetition is an important means of inculcating ethical principles. Early in the *Laws* Plato calls attention to this as a marked element of Spartan life. Referring to verses of Tyrtaios, the Athenian stranger suggests that Megillos is replete (διακορής) with them; Megillos emphatically agrees (629b). In surviving texts Greek authors use this rare word, and the related διάκορος, chiefly in connection with Sparta, sometimes with a clearly negative overtone.¹⁴⁹ At Sparta constant striving was an ideal; satisfaction apparently had a bad name. For Plato the exposure of Spartans to Tyrtaios may well in some sense be overdone. Athenaeus carries a report that Spartan soldiers chanted Tyrtaian poetry as they marched;¹⁵⁰ he cites Philokhoros for the statement that on campaign Spartans followed supper by chanting the Paian then by hearing individuals sing something by Tyrtaios, in competition for a prize.¹⁵¹ The fourth-century Athenian orator Lykourgos remarks on the role of Tyrtaian poems in the education of Spartans.¹⁵² The prominent role at Sparta of music more generally is attested by writers early and late.¹⁵³ Near the end of the sixth century, Pratinas of Phleious compared the Spartans with cicadas, in their readiness for choral singing.¹⁵⁴ Another fragment of Pratinas involves a distinction which reminds us of the educational potential of musical performances. The fragment contains an energetic protest against the subordination of choral singing to flute-playing; rather flute-playing, it is made clear, must be subordinate to song, as it is in the *Dorian* chorus.¹⁵⁵ Plato protests similarly, in the *Laws*, against 'the playing of flute and lyre other than to accompany dance and song' (669e–670a). The singing of words, and decorous movement, should matter more than abstract sound.

Almost as enduring as the belief in Sparta's unusual attachment to music was the theme of Spartan conservatism in music, from the late archaic period onwards. In the *Laws* it is suggested that Spartans and Cretans, in not welcoming innovations in anything to do with music, were unlike other Greeks (660b).

Floating stories, involving rigorous conservatism in musical matters on the part of the Spartan authorities, attached themselves in later times to innovative musical figures, such as Terpan-dros and Timotheos. When the musician presented a novel combination of strings, the Spartans confiscated his instrument or physically attacked it.¹⁵⁶ Athenaeus describes the Spartans as being strict and learned, down to his own day, in preserving ancient songs – in short, as first among Greeks in their preservation of music.¹⁵⁷ He explains the Spartan enthusiasm for music as a reaction to the Lakonian lifestyle; music provided an enchantment (κηλητικόν) for those living in severe conditions and in self-imposed restraint (633a).¹⁵⁸ No doubt thoughts of relaxation were important (cf. *Laws* 653c–d, 654a, and in particular Plato's etymological connection there of χορός with χαρά, 'joy'; 813a.). But the strain of public competition was present here too, and there was stress in dancing, most notably at the Gymnopaideiai in the heat of summer (*Laws* 633b–c).¹⁵⁹ Song provided an agreeable medium for the repetition of approved political slogans. Requirements of metre, alliteration and assonance helped preserve the messages from corruption. Choral song was one more form of team endeavour contributing to harmony, similarity and physical fitness for war (cf. 830d). Even when there was competition in singing, that too rewarded conformity and presupposed shared aims. Social music furthered the Lykourgan system by helping to exclude privacy and individuality.

Lakonic utterances in prose lent themselves to repetition; that, surely, was part of their purpose in a moralising, oral society. Brevity conduced to memorability. So, perhaps, did alliteration, repetition and stylistic balance in Lakonian oral texts. These devices of style must have been familiar at Sparta, as elsewhere, from lyric poetry and oracular verse,¹⁶⁰ the authors of which would themselves have been aiming at mnemonic effects. We note the presence of these features in some of the few sayings with a fair claim to have been uttered by Spartans: the Spartan prisoner's riposte after Sphakteria, recorded by Thucydides:¹⁶¹ πολλοῦ ἂν ἄξιον εἶναι τὸν ἄτρακτον εἰ τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς

διεγίγνωσκε (the *ἄν* should not be included as an alliterating element; presumably a Spartan here would have said *κα*); the 'Great Rhetra' (for which a Delphic origin was alleged): Διὸς Συλλανίου καὶ Ἀθηναῖς Συλλανίας ἱερὸν ἰδρυσάμενον φυλάς φυλάξαντα καὶ ὠβάς ὠβάξαντα τριάκοντα γερούσιαν σὺν ἀρχαγέταις καταστήσαντα ὥρας ἕξ ὥρας;¹⁶² and the questions put (according to Plutarch) to Spartan boys: (ὅς)τις ἀριστος ἐν τοῖς ἀνδράσιν; ποῖα τις ἢ (τοῦδε) πράξις;¹⁶³

Plato's Megillos, on occasion, speaks – or quotes – in similar style (838c–d): μηδὲς μηδαμῶς ἄλλως ἀναπνεῖν ἐπιχειρήσῃ ποτὲ παρὰ τὸν νόμον. Talking with Megillos, the Athenian stranger describes the three old men, in their discussion of laws, as παίζοντας παιδιὰν πρεσβυτικὴν σώφρονα (685a). Compare a phrase used when the Athenian stranger claims to be reproducing Spartan and Cretan ideology concerning laws: πάντα καλῶς κείται θέντων θεῶν (634e). (The expression καλῶς κείσθαι is also used of Lykourgos' laws in Plutarch's paraphrase of Delphic comment thereon.)¹⁶⁴ Such stylistic repetitions occur very frequently in the late, and no doubt largely fictional, collection of Lakonic apophthegms in the Plutarchan corpus, and even more frequently, as a proportion, among sayings of non-Spartans recorded in the same context.¹⁶⁵ apophthegmatic style was not confined to Sparta, but Sparta was the most famous source of it. However, to isolate particular features of Spartan culture as inculcating-by-repetition is almost to mislead. Spartan society, with its homogenized citizenry, its compulsory routines (daily and seasonal), its well-practised stratagems and manoeuvres, was constructed *in general* so as to mould the character by repeated experience, to an extent probably unique in the Greek world. The formulaic nature of Lakonian life may even be seen as one cause of the secrecy which Thucydides ascribed to Sparta. A city which trusts to improvisation and versatility may relish the enterprise in walking naked.¹⁶⁶ But one which relies on formulae should fear to be imitated and predicted by its enemies; it had better keep itself dark.

On the subject of repetition Plato may seem to criticize Sparta

in several ways. If indeed there is censure in the comment on Spartans 'replete' with poetry of Tyrtaios, it may connect with Plato's insistence on the need for variety in the communication of the unchanging moral messages carried in song:

by hook or by crook, we must see that these charms constantly change their form; without fail they must be continually varied, so that the performers always long to sing the songs, and find perpetual pleasure in them (665c).¹⁶⁷

The language of the original here is highly wrought; itself repetitive, rhythmic and alliterative:

Τὸ δεῖν πάντα ἄνδρα καὶ παῖδα, ἐλεύθερον καὶ δοῦλον, θῆλυν τε καὶ ἄρρενα καὶ ὅλη τῇ πόλει ὅλην τὴν πόλιν αὐτὴν αὐτῇ ἐπέδουσαν μὴ παύεσθαι ποτε ταῦτα, ἀ διεληλύθαμεν ἀμῶς γέ πως αἰεὶ μεταβαλλόμενα καὶ πάντως παρεχόμενα ποικιλίαν, ὥστε ἀπληστίαν εἶναι τινα τῶν ὕμνων τοῖς ἄδουσι καὶ ἡδονήν.

In the fourth century, various internal faults were identified by outsiders as having contributed to the decay of Sparta; should boredom now be added to the list?

An explicit and robust criticism of Sparta is made concerning the moral content of Spartan song. At 666e the Athenian stranger says that Spartans (and Cretans) have the constitution of an armed camp, failing to provide special guidance for the potential administrator.¹⁶⁸ It appears from the sequel that he has in mind the lack of a body of cerebral elders who would enlighten the moral content of song (670a–671a). Tyrtaios' emphasis on the primacy of physical courage is stated to be wrong; courage comes fourth in the virtues, as Platonic administrators would know (667a). A cognate criticism of Sparta is intended when, at 673c, the Athenian stranger states that the Spartans (and Cretans) have much more experience of gymnastics than of music. (A similar remark is made in the *Republic* in a passage forthrightly critical of Sparta.)¹⁶⁹ In the *Laws* there is far more space given to music and dance than to non-musical gymnastics. Plato's alienation from Sparta in this matter may be seen as itself

proceeding from a Spartan-inspired basis; the Spartans were not musical enough, but they were the most musical of existing cities. Similarly with repetition in the sphere of children's play; the Athenian complains that 'in every city everyone is ignorant of the fact that the character of children's play is crucial for determining whether laws will be stable' (797a). The adoption of novelties in childhood, it is explained, will lead in adult life to a desire for constitutional novelties (798c). But although Sparta is implicitly included in the adverse criticism, surely Plato believed that no state had gone as far as Sparta towards attaining uniformity and stability in the activity of children.¹⁷⁰ At 656c (as at 832d) by juxtaposing παιδείαν and παιδιάν Plato emphasizes the connection between play and education. It is in this context that England made his remark about senility and a 'weakness for verbal jingles' in the *Laws*. Rather we may see Plato sanely echoing the linguistic patterns, as well as the educational theory, of Sparta.

Repetition is a prominent and conscious element of Plato's programme in the *Laws*. If we remember the Plato who portrayed untrammelled Socratic *elenkhos* and wrote of 'going wherever the argument may lead',¹⁷¹ we may find it difficult properly to perceive the emphasis given in the *Laws* to uncritical, programmed learning. Consider, for example, the qualified but emphatic statement of 672e: 'We found that singing and dancing, taken together, amounted, in a sense, to [young people's] education as a whole (ὅλη παιδευσίς ἦν ἡμῖν).' As Morrow pointed out, there are very many occurrences in the *Laws* of words for enchantment, ἐπάδειν, ἐπωδή and cognates.¹⁷² Particularly revealing is 666c where Plato writes self-consciously: ᾄδειν τε καὶ ὁ πολλάκις εἰρήκαμεν ἐπάδειν ('to sing and, as we have often said, to cast a spell').¹⁷³

Singing is a form of seductive instruction (what it seduces us from is criticism and self-consciousness). Here Plato confronts a controversial feature of his own method, rather as he does in the *Republic* by using the (generally negative) ψευδ- and ἀπάτη of untrue official communications which he commends.¹⁷⁴ (Cf. the

negative sense of ἐπῳδαί at 933a, d.) Lack of moral courage was evidently not one of his failings.¹⁷⁵ The *Laws* is not the only book in which Plato mentions the instructional virtue of ἐπῳδή; the *Phaedo*, in particular, plays with the idea of using such artful repetition to overcome disbelief.¹⁷⁶ But it may not be accidental that earnest references to this method of indoctrination are frequent in the present, Spartan-influenced, work.

Notwithstanding the proclaimed need for variety in music, Plato warns against the alteration of music in its fundamentals (such as its doctrinal aspects) with a firmness which might not have been out of place in Lakonia.¹⁷⁷ His need for such conservatism is clearer if we understand how much doctrine he intends to set to music. All of the principles announced in the *Laws* are to be uttered in song.¹⁷⁸ In rhythmical and repetitive language Plato commends the hallowing and preservation of dance and song; there should be one set of unchanging pleasures for one unchanging city, composed of citizens as far as possible similar to each other: ὁμοίους – the distinctively Spartan term (816c). In a separate passage, using the alliterative Greek quoted, and partially translated, above,¹⁷⁹ he describes poignantly the mutual indoctrination required of people in a totalitarian society:

The need for every man and child, free person and slave, female and male, and for the whole city never to cease working on the whole city with songs of enchantment from itself to itself...but by hook or by crook, etc. (665c).¹⁸⁰

By artful, multiple repetition of the official line, doubter is to soothe doubter. Our own familiarity with the orchestration of opinion, derived from knowledge of National Socialism and Stalinism, may obscure for us the question of where the philosopher, brought up in the irrepressible pluralism of Athens, learned that human nature lent itself to the regimented quelling of disbelief.¹⁸¹

A Spartan or Lakonizing element in the intended audience of the *Laws* ?

In a chapter of *Plato's Cretan City* entitled 'The mixed constitution', Morrow collected both Spartan and Athenian influences on the *Laws*. Since the present paper has concentrated on a particular category of Spartan influences, it may serve as a useful signpost to quote part of Morrow's summary of Athenian elements within the work:

But when we come to the political structure of Plato's state the influence of Sparta almost completely disappears. It has no kings, no ephors; its basic structure – with its assembly, council, prytanies, and annually elected officers, is thoroughly Athenian... Plato's judicial system is a strikingly new creation, but the elements of which it is constructed seem to be Athenian rather than Spartan or Cretan; and the procedure prescribed for trials in his courts is based in general and in detail upon Attic law, whose technical terms and devices Plato follows even in his innovations... Finally, Plato's Nocturnal Council, devoted as it is to the cultivation of the higher sciences and their application to law and government, is an institution that could only be suggested by an Athenian, or by some quite atypical Dorian.¹⁸²

Morrow writes of the *Laws* as involving a 'middle way' (ibid.) between Athens and Sparta.¹⁸³ He states that the 'mixture of Dorian and Ionian' is 'suggested in the very structure of the dialogue, with the Athenian Stranger discoursing upon and correcting the practices of his two Dorian companions'.¹⁸⁴ He finds that, so far as Cretan institutions are now known, it is Spartan, much more than Cretan, practices that interest Plato in the work.¹⁸⁵ But even if it were possible to measure the respective contributions of Athens and Sparta to the *Laws*, and they were seen to be in perfect balance, that would not settle the question of how important for the author were different potential audiences. Here it is instructive to look at the few passages in

the work which seem to make direct comparisons of Athenian and Spartan practice. When the Athenian stranger advocates some knowledge of mathematics and astronomy, Kleinias refers to Cretan and Spartan 'customary inexperience in such matters'. The Athenian, however, reassures him that there is nothing dreadful about complete inexperience; abundance of experience and learning (πολυπειρία, πολυμαθία) are far worse, if combined with a bad upbringing (818c–819a). That Athens was viewed from Sparta as a place of useless knowledge is made probable by a speech of King Arkhidamos in Thucydides.¹⁸⁶ The familiar cultural polarity between the two cities is even more clearly implicit when the Athenian stranger confronts the problem that the gilded term 'wisdom' (σοφία) implies learning, yet learning is compatible with surrender to wrong impulses (689a–d). The Athenian proceeds with a remarkable definition of σοφία. People with a tendency to evil must be addressed degradingly (δνειδιστέον, 689c) – dishonour being a favourite instrument of control at Sparta and one invoked often in the *Laws*.¹⁸⁷ They are to be degraded with the term 'ignorant' (ἄμαθέσιν), even if they are very well versed in argument (πάνυ λογιστικοί), mentally sophisticated and well practised in activities conducive to speed of wit. The term 'wise' (σοφούς) must be applied to people of the opposite kind, 'even if, as the saying goes, they can neither read nor swim' (689 c–d). Plato expected his readers (or hearers) to think of Athens when they met the word λογιστικοί; in an earlier passage he had written that all Greeks take it for granted that Athens is φιλόλογος and πολύλογος, while Sparta is βραχύλογος (641e; cf. Alkidamas ap. Arist. *Rhet.* 1398b on the Spartans as ἥκιστα φιλόλογοι).¹⁸⁸ The saying 'can neither read nor swim' would be exactly appropriate as a sneer of the literate, sea-going Athenians against the book-despising landlubbers of Sparta.¹⁸⁹ In any case, ignorance was a prominent concept in Athenian and other rhetoric concerning Sparta.¹⁹⁰ In his treatment of wisdom and ignorance, Plato is pointedly attempting to turn Athenian values on their head, to the benefit of Sparta. He does so again when describing the atheistic natural science

contained in books current in Athens (886). Paradoxically, such learned atheism constitutes a form of ignorance, ἀμαθία; it is the Spartans and Cretans, 'living on the outside', who are superior in this matter; the excellence of their political systems excludes these written arguments (886b). The Athenian stranger takes Sparta's side explicitly when comparing the way different states react to opposing extremes, autocracy and democracy; Sparta and Crete have taken the better line, Athens and Persia long ago performed similarly, but now are inferior in this respect (693d–e).

It has long been felt that the *Laws* stands apart from the rest of Plato's work. The scarcity of metaphysical argument, of references to the theory of forms, the concentration on the practical devices of power, have drawn the suggestion that the book was written for a different, less philosophic, audience.¹⁹¹ In spite of the repeated apostrophe of the Spartans, the hypothesis that Spartans were prominent in the author's mind as potential audience has not been popular.¹⁹² One reason for this may be that the Spartans have seemed unlikely to read books, let alone books by outsiders, on political matters, critical, albeit politely critical, of Sparta. However, Hodkinson and Gray, in this volume, give reasons why this impression may need to be modified.¹⁹³ And what matters in the present connection is the evidence as to whether an Athenian political writer could persuade himself, *rightly or wrongly*, that his ideas could reach the Spartans, directly or through intermediaries. Authorial optimism can be a wonderful thing. As Hodkinson observes, Isokrates claims to believe that he had a Spartan readership.¹⁹⁴ Plato is prepared, here and elsewhere, to advance ideas he thought likely to be ridiculed (above, pp. 306 f.). Given the extraordinary power of Sparta in the early fourth century, and the feeling among writers with a degree of admiration for the Spartans that some things in Lakonian life were going seriously wrong,¹⁹⁵ it would be surprising if unsolicited advice had not been directed at Sparta.¹⁹⁶ Plato's contriving in the *Laws* to secure the acceptance by the Spartan interlocutor of argument un-Lakonian in its length (above, p. 277), shows an awareness of

a problem in addressing Spartans; to outweigh the lack of verisimilitude, the device of a Spartan interlocutor may, therefore, have needed to possess some great virtue. That the *Laws* does contain *some* reference to difficult philosophic doctrine, such as the theory of forms and the Sokratic paradox, means that Plato intended highly literate non-Spartans to form at least part of his audience. It would make a convenient hypothesis if those men were also Lakonizers; the direct addressing of the Spartans (ὦ Λακεδαιμόνιοι) may not have been meant literally, but may instead have been a device to engage pro-Spartans. The question whether Spartans or Lakonizers are likelier to have been in Plato's mind cannot perhaps be answered; there is also the possibility that Lakonizers were seen by Plato, as perhaps by Isokrates,¹⁹⁷ as a conduit to the Spartans. A great attraction of writing for Lakonizers lay in the high literacy of some of them. On the other hand, Sparta actually possessed a community which embodied, or approached, many of the ideals set out in the *Laws*; for an idealist as strong-willed and as frustrated as Plato, there may have lain a potent intellectual temptation in the thought that the Spartans might be persuaded to change.

Criticisms of Athens in the *Laws* are passionate on occasion, but scarcely sustained. On the other hand, criticism of Sparta, at first prominent and blunt, later oblique and tactful, seems central to the work, not least because of the thoroughness with which it is executed. If indeed such elaborate fault-finding was addressed to Spartans themselves, Plato surely expected great difficulty in persuading this proud, self-insulated people to take notice of the criticisms of an Athenian. This may help to explain one of the most striking historical claims in the work: that Tyrtaios was originally an Athenian (629a).¹⁹⁸ The poet is censured as an inadequate moralist; the claim that Tyrtaios came from Athens may be meant in part to weaken any impression that Plato had anti-Spartan motives in criticizing him. But the reference to Tyrtaios could have an additional purpose. If his verse, embedded in Spartan life, is failing the community, perhaps a new set of songs, of laws, is needed. And the idea of an

Athenian Tyrtaios, if it had any plausibility, could have helped the suggestion that another Athenian might provide the new songs. At Sparta, supposedly the most traditional of states, to accept new νόμοι from Plato need not have been contrary to tradition.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank warmly Paul Cartledge, N.R.E. Fisher, Stephen Hodkinson and Terence Irwin for their suggestions and criticisms.

Notes

(References are to the *Laws* except where otherwise indicated.)

- 1 καὶ ἐν εἰρήνῃ is repeated; 942b–c, cf. 803e.
- 2 942d with 633b–c and, e.g., Xen. *Lak. Pol.* 2 3–7, Plut. *Lyk.* 16.
- 3 E.g., 1 2 f.; 2 1–4, 12–14; 3 1; 4 7; 5 2, 5; 6 1, 4; 7 1 ff.; 8 1 f.; 9 4; 10 4 f., 8; 11 1, 7; 12 5; 13 5; 15 1.
- 4 2 10 f.
- 5 Cf. 688c, 690a.
- 6 Cf. [Plat.] *Alkib.* I 120e–121a.
- 7 V 66 4, cf. Plut. *Lyk.* 16, *Ages.* 1 3. Commendation of knowing how to be ruled as well as to rule, and play on the active and passive of ἀρχ–, are not confined to contexts with a strong Spartan connection; Plat. *Protag.* 326d, Arist. *Pol.* 1277a–b, Solon *ap.* Diog. Laert. I 60. But what may have been seen as distinctively Spartan were the emphasis on the individual's commanding and being commanded *simultaneously* and success in attaining that ideal.
- 8 Stob. vol. II p. 138 no. 134 (Meineke).
- 9 Plut. *Mor.* 212b–c, 215d, cf. 211a.

- 10 Morrow, op. cit. 573; W.K.C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy* vol. V 378–81.
- 11 An exception is P. Roussel, *Étude sur le principe de l'ancienneté dans le monde hellénique* (Mem. de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 43 pt. 2 (1942)) 123–227 at 187–96. See below, p. 282.
- 12 755a, 765d, 802b, 829c, 946a, 951c, cf. 665b, 670a–b, 953c; Rep. 540a. On gerontocracy in the Republic see also, e.g., 412c, 465a, 613c–d.
- 13 671e, 759d, 812b–c, 878e, cf. 664d.
- 14 R.F. Stalley, *An Introduction to Plato's Laws*, 3.
- 15 K.R. Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies* vol. I, 267, n. 18.
- 16 Pol. 1264b.
- 17 Cf. G.E.L. Owen, *CQ* (n.s.) 3 (1953) 93.
- 18 *The Laws of Plato* vol. I p. 285.
- 19 See Morrow, op. cit. 515–18.
- 20 G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* 132–7 and Appendix XXVI, P. Cartledge, *Agésilaios* esp. 121–5.
- 21 Xen. *Lak. Pol.* 10 1–3, Plut. *Lyk.* 26.
- 22 Arist. *Pol.* 1270b, Plut. *Lyk.* 26.
- 23 The translation here, as in most cases below, is taken from that of T.J. Saunders (*Plato: the Laws*), a judicious and most valuable work. Occasionally I have diverged, where Saunders' version appears to give Plato's meaning as less illiberal than the Greek requires.
- 24 Cf. R. Sallares, *The Ecology of the Ancient Greek World* s. II, pt. 5.
- 25 III 4, cf. I 23 f., III 2, cf. Xen. *Mem.* III 6 1.
- 26 Thuc. V 43 2; VI 12 2; 17 1; Lys. XVI 20.
- 27 Frieze II, Block 879; illustrated at W.A.P. Childs, *The City-Reliefs of Lycia*, Plate 13.1.
- 28 IG 5 1 51 ll. 6 f., 27 f.; 504 l. 16; 552 l. 11; 555b ll. 19 f.; 556 l. 6; 564 l. 3; cf. 675 l. 5.
- 29 C.M. Tazelaar, *Mnemosyne* 20 (1967) 127–53, Powell, *Athens and Sparta*, 232.
- 30 *Mem.* III 5 15.
- 31 II 80 1, cf. Plut. *Mor.* 235c–f.

- 32 *Lak. Pol.* 9 5.
- 33 *Ibid.* 5 5, cf. *Laws* 659d.
- 34 *Ibid.* 3 1 f.
- 35 *ap. Plut. Ages.* 1.
- 36 Cf. 685a; 712b, 770a (older than the (old) Guardians of the Laws) 820c, 821a, 846c.
- 37 R. Weil, *L' 'Archéologie' de Platon*, 39.
- 38 The Spartans' own term was γερωντία (*Xen. Lak. Pol.* 10 1); cf. *Ar. Lysist.* 980, where the text is doubtful.
- 39 See J. Miller in Pauly-Wissowa, s.v. 'Gerontes' (iii).
- 40 Cf. *Rep.* 539b-c.
- 41 Cf. *Rep.* 539d.
- 42 See, for example, *Xen. Hell.* III 4 18 and evidence collected by R. Parker in Powell (ed.) *Classical Sparta*, 142-72 (on religious dutifulness); *Thuc.* I 18 1, *Lys.* XXXIII 7, *Xen. Lak. Pol.* 15 1 (stability); *Hdt.* VII 104, *Xen. ibid.* 8 1 (subordination to law). Sparta's laws, unlike Plato's, were unwritten; *Arist. Pol.* 1270b, *Plut. Lyk.* 13, P. Cartledge, *JHS* 98 (1978) 33-7.
- 43 Cf. F. Ollier, *Le mirage spartiate*, 261. This is not to deny the profound influence of Sparta on the *Republic*, a subject deserving more attention than it usually receives.
- 44 E.g., *Hdt.* I 65, *Thuc.* I 12 3; 18 1, *Xen. Lak. Pol.* 10 8, *Plat. Laws* 691e-692a, *Arist. Pol.* 1313a, *Plut. Lyk.* 2; 7; 11.
- 45 Cf. 711b-712b, 752b-c, and refs. at Schütrumpf, this volume (p. 341 n. 1).
- 46 Powell, *Athens and Sparta*, 155-7.
- 47 E.g., 'Who are the *real* terrorists/extremists/users of violence?'
- 48 Cf. 802b - over 50.
- 49 Cf. 947e, *Rep.* 540c.
- 50 *Meno* 99d; used by Megillos at 626c; cf. *Arist. NE* 1145a.
- 51 Cf. *Rep.* 540b-c.
- 52 *Hdt.* VI 58, *Xen. Lak. Pol.* 15 9, *Hell.* III 3 1; Cartledge, *Agasilaos*, ch. 16.
- 53 Cf. 929d-e, 932b-c.

- 54 Plut. *Lyk.* 6.
- 55 Ibid. Dr Paul Cartledge has kindly pointed out to me the use of *πρεσβύτερα* in the sense of 'more important' at Hdt. V 63, in a phrase which reports Spartan public piety and which may derive from, or at least be contrived to suggest, a Spartan source.
- 56 659d, 754c, 914d, 924c, 929e, 932b–c, 961a.
- 57 Cf. 659d.
- 58 Cf. 895b, 896b, 966d–e, 967b, d.
- 59 Cf. 895b.
- 60 Loc. cit. (above, n. 11).
- 61 Ibid. 174, 196.
- 62 Ibid. 174.
- 63 Justin XX 4, Iamblichus *VP* 25 and Val. Max. VIII 7 2.
- 64 Stob. vol. II pp. 88 f., no. 49 (Meineke), Iamblichus *VP* 209; A. Delatte, *Essai sur la politique pythagoricienne (Bibl. Fac. Philos. et Lettres de Liège, 29 (1922))* 51.
- 65 Iamblichus *VP* 98.
- 66 Ibid. 68, 95; Delatte, op. cit., 145.
- 67 Stob. vol. II p. 138 no. 134 (Meineke).
- 68 Op. cit. 197–206.
- 69 See, e.g., Guthrie, op. cit. IV 32 f., 35, 38, 251 f., 256.
- 70 Ollier, op. cit. 205.
- 71 On the genuineness or otherwise of material attributed in antiquity to Arkhytas, see the bibliography at Guthrie (n. 10) I 335 n. 3. On Plato as friend of Arkhytas, *VIIth Letter* 338c, 339a, d, 350a–b. For Aristoxenos as pupil of Aristotle, *Suda* s.v. *Ἀριστόξευος*.
- 72 Cf. 931.
- 73 Cf. 734e. Plutarch writes of the rigorously prescribed nature of the musical νόμος (*Mor.* 1133b).
- 74 Cf. 957c on the allegedly significant similarity of νόμος and νοῦς; 653e–654a on χορός and χαρά.
- 75 Plut. *Lyk.* 6.
- 76 H.T. Wade-Gery, *CQ* 37 (1943) 70; 38 (1944) 117; compare the gloss of Plut., loc. cit.

- 77 It will be seen that I cannot agree with Saunders (op. cit. 95 n. 8), who believes that there are many plays on words in the *Laws* which 'it is either impossible or undesirable to reproduce in English'.
- 78 Thuc. IV 80 3 f., Xen. *Ages.* 1 17, *Hell.* I 6 36 f., IV 3 13 f. In general on Spartan deceptiveness, Powell (ed.), *Classical Sparta* ch. 7.
- 79 Thuc. I 133.
- 80 Xen. *Hell.* III 3 8–11.
- 81 Thuc. V 68 2, cf. II 39 1.
- 82 *Lyk.* 12.
- 83 Plut. *Mor.* 234 f., cf. ib. 229a.
- 84 Eur. *Andr.* 446–52 and W. Poole, this volume, pp. 7 ff.; On Aristophanes, D. Harvey, this volume, pp. 38 f. Cf. Thuc. IV 50 2, V 45 3.
- 85 Hdt. VI 136, Dem. XX 100, 135; XLIX 67, Hypereides IV 1 and esp. 8.
- 86 Cf. de Ste. Croix, *CQ* 13 (1963) 110–19.
- 87 Thuc. V 45. It may be significant that the exceptional account of Athenian communal deceit, involving the rebuilding of the city walls, occurs in connection with an individual, Themistokles, who was probably the target of official Spartan storytelling; Thuc. I 89 3–92, and below.
- 88 Saunders' translation, 'with one heart and voice', may unnecessarily suggest sincerity; the Greek says only 'with a single voice and mouth' – *μῆλ' ἑνὸς στόματος*.
- 89 Cf. 841c.
- 90 Cf. 870d–e, 872d–873a, 914b, 931b–c, 941a, R.L. Nettleship, *The Theory of Education in Plato's Republic*, 33 f., Morrow, op. cit. 455–7.
- 91 Saunders' translation, save for the phrase italicised, which renders the Greek *ἀλλοθεν ὁθενοῦν*. The arrangements described at 828a–c, for devising a religious calendar, may involve rather less regard for tradition.
- 92 Cf. Morrow, op. cit. 429 f.
- 93 Cf. 816c.

- 94 For the possibility of change, when every citizen and all the oracles are in favour, 772c–d.
- 95 Cf. 632d. On Lykourgos himself as a god, Parker in Powell (ed.), *Classical Sparta*, 152.
- 96 *Lak. Pol.* 8 5.
- 97 W.K. Pritchett, *The Greek State at War*, (e.g.) I 113, III 68 ff. S. Hodkinson, *Chiron* 13 (1983) 273–6; Parker, loc. cit. 155 ff.
- 98 Parker, loc. cit. 143, 152 ff., de Ste. Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*, 138–49.
- 99 Xen., *Lak. Pol.* 13 11; 15 2.
- 100 Hdt. VI 56 f., Arist. *Pol.* 1285a
- 101 Hdt. VI 57 2–4, Xen., *Lak. Pol.* 15 5, Parker, loc. cit. 154.
- 102 Xen. *Hell.* IV 7 2, Arist. *Rhet.* 1398b.
- 103 Thuc. V 16 2.
- 104 Cited at Plut. *Lys.* 25.
- 105 Plut. *Kleom.* 11 3–6, Parker, loc. cit. 155 for other divination by ephors.
- 106 P. Magnus, *Gladstone*, 175 f., 256, 272, 359, 401, 440 f.
- 107 C. Woodham-Smith, *Florence Nightingale*, 16–18, 74, 529.
- 108 Thuc. I 84 3, Plat. *Laws* 634d–e.
- 109 Op. cit. (n. 97) 276.
- 110 Loc. cit. 160 ff.
- 111 R. Weil, *L' 'Archéologie' de Platon* 35 f., citing K.I. Vourveris, ΑΙ Ιστορικοί γνώσεις, B', Πλάτων και 'Αθῆναι table 8 and p. 39 f.
- 112 1395a
- 113 VI 75, 72; VII 231 f.; IX 71.
- 114 VI 86; the quotation is from Parker, loc. cit. 161.
- 115 I 128–34.
- 116 I 135–38.
- 117 *Hell.* III 3 4–11.
- 118 *Hell.* V 4 45, cf. 2 25–32.
- 119 *Hell.* IV 8 38 f.
- 120 *Lak. Pol.* V 6.
- 121 *Lyk.* 18.

- 122 *Lyk.* 21.
- 123 *Rep.* 550e, Thuc. I 132 1 f.; IV 108 7; VIII 89 3, Xen. *Hell.* II 4 29; cf. Cassius Dio XXXVI 31 ff.
- 124 I 138 6.
- 125 For poetic praise and blame of the living, cf. 829c.
- 126 Xen. *Lak. Pol.* 14, Plat. *Rep.* 547b, 548a–b, cf. *Laws* 806c, Arist. *Pol.* 1269b–1270a. See also the article of Hodgkinson in this volume.
- 127 *Rep.* 572d–573c.
- 128 Op. cit. 131 f., 138.
- 129 Op. cit. 129.
- 130 121b–122c.
- 131 *Pol.* 1269b.
- 132 With the last clause quoted cf. Plut. *Ages.* 1 on the omission from the Spartan *agōgē* of heirs apparent to the kingship; also Cartledge, *Agesilaos* 23 f. In this context of the *Laws* the repeated reference to the πόλις of the Spartans (696a; 696b κατὰ πόλιν γε) may mean that Plato is implicitly distinguishing between official and unofficial Spartan attitudes towards wealth. (I owe this observation to Professor T.H. Irwin.)
- 133 *Pol.* 1269b–1270a.
- 134 Cf. 666e–667a, Arist. *Pol.* 1338b.
- 135 *Hell.* V 4 1.
- 136 Op. cit. 118.
- 137 Cf. 950b.
- 138 The story of Athens' conflict with Minos risks giving slight offence to the Cretan Kleinias. The reference to μνησικακία has been seen, as by Saunders in his translation, as a tactful glance at him, rather than at Megillos; the 'you' whom the Athenian stranger wishes not to offend are plural, ὑμῖν (706a), which may even include the Λακεδαιμόνιοι who earlier came to the front of Plato's mind.
- 139 Cf. *Gorg.* 527a. For a very different perspective, T.J. Saunders, 'Plato on women in the *Laws*', in Powell (ed.), *The Greek World* (forthcoming).

- 140 See above, and cf. 854c, 885b, 888b, 890a, 927c.
- 141 Cf. T.J. Saunders, *Hermes* 96 (1968) 421–34.
- 142 Cf. 859c–864b. The benefits of fear, fear of the bad opinions of others, that is, are emphasized in the *Laws* in a way that recalls Sparta; 646e–647c, 671c–d (θεῖον φόβον), 699c, cf. 840c, Weil, op. cit. 48, 50, 145. On Sparta, Thuc. V 9 9 (Brasidas) and Plut. *Kleom.* 8f: ‘The Spartans have a shrine of fear...thinking that the constitution is chiefly held together by fear.’
- 143 Thuc. VI 89 6.
- 144 Nettleship, op. cit. 34, 37, 39.
- 145 Cf. T.H. Irwin, *Plato: Gorgias*, 248.
- 146 N. Gulley, *Greece and Rome* 24 (1977) 166, Popper, op. cit. I 143.
- 147 See above on the Dorian alliance and Persian education.
- 148 Below, pp. 306 f.
- 149 Cf. Xen. *Lak. Pol.* 1 5, Plut. *Lyk.* 15, Plut. *Mor.* 228a.
- 150 630 f.
- 151 630e–f; cf. Xen. *Lak. Pol.* 12 7; cf. E. Bowie in O. Murray (ed.), *Sympotica*, 224 ff.
- 152 *Kata Leok.* 106 f., cf. Plut. *Kleom.* 2.
- 153 Plut. *Lyk.* 21, Athen. 628e–f, 632f–633a, cf. Morrow, 303 f., H. Michell, *Sparta*, 182–90.
- 154 Athen. 633a.
- 155 Athen. 617b–f.
- 156 Plut. *Mor.* 220c, 233f, [Plut.] ibid. 238c–d, Pausan. III 12, Athen. 636e–f, Dio Chrys. *Orat.* 33,
- 157 632 f., cf. [Plut.] *Mor.* 238c.
- 158 633a. Shortly before, he had quoted Polybius as giving a similar explanation of the flourishing of music in the harsh environment of Arkadia (626a–e; cf. Polyb. IV 20 5–21 4).
- 159 F. Boelte, *Rheinisches Museum* 78 (1929) 124–30.
- 160 E.g., Alkman 2 7 f.; 22; 39 (in D.L. Page, *Lyrica Graeca Selecta*). Note the repetition in Simonides’ epitaph on Spartans: ὦ ξείν’, ἀγγέλλειν Λακεδαιμονίοις ὅτι τῇδε

- κείμεθα τοῖς κείνων ῥήμασι πειθόμενοι (Hdt. VII 228). For oracular verse, H.W. Parke and D.E.W. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle* vol. II, xxiv and (e.g.) nos. 6, 31, 33, 41, 84, 112, 121, 122.
- 161 IV 40 2.
- 162 Plut. *Lyk.* 6.
- 163 Ibid. 18.
- 164 *Lyk.* 29; cf. *Laws* 637a.
- 165 Compare Plut. *Apophth. Lac.* (= *Mor.* 208b–236e) *passim*, and the sayings attributed to Lykourgos at Plut. *Lyk.* 19, with the sayings of non-Spartans in *Mor.* 175a–194e.
- 166 Thuc. I 138 3; II 39 1; 41 1.
- 167 The translation combines elements from the versions of England and Saunders. Cf. 816c, e.
- 168 Cf. 965a, *Rep.* 546d–e, 547e–548a on a Spartan bias against the appointment of intelligent officials.
- 169 548b–c, where ‘music’ includes philosophy; cf. 546d, 548e, 549b.
- 170 In this context (798a–b) Plato refers to belief in the antiquity of existing laws, a reference which may well have been inspired by the case of Sparta; cf. Thuc. I 18 1.
- 171 An idea which occurs in the *Laws* (667a) as well as in the *Republic* (394d).
- 172 659e, 664b, 665c, 671a, 773d, 812c, 837e, 887d, 903b; cf. Morrow, op. cit. 309 f.
- 173 Cf. 659e.
- 174 Above, p. 285.
- 175 He expects mockery; 781c, 789e–790a, 830b, cf. 800b, 830d.
- 176 77e–78a, 114d.
- 177 Cf. 700a–701a, 817a–d.
- 178 ‘Uttered’ (λέγοντας), not merely ‘upheld’ in song (as Saunders); 664b.
- 179 p. 305.
- 180 As quoted above, p. 305.
- 181 See Parker, loc. cit. 149, for the probability that, in the

classical period, a far higher proportion of citizens took part in choral singing at Sparta than at Athens.

182 p. 534.

183 Contrast Ollier, op. cit. 268, 273, 289.

184 p. 533.

185 Ibid.

186 I 84 3.

187 721a-b, d (degrading of bachelors, familiar to us from Plut. *Lyk.* 15), 762a, c, 764a, 847a, 854d, 855b, cf. Cartledge, *Sparta and Lakonia*, 310.

188 On Athens as a place of mental sophistication and speed of wit, compare Thuc. II 40 1; 41 1.

189 Cf. Isok. *Panath.* 209. That the phrase, a cliché on Plato's showing, is otherwise unrecorded, may reflect the pro-Spartan and anti-democratic tendencies of those who wrote books. On the level of literacy at Sparta, Cartledge *JHS* 98 (1978) 25-37.

190 E.g., Thuc. I 68 1; 84 3; 142 8; II 40 3 (cf. II 62 4), III 37 3, Plut. *Lyk.* 20, *Mor.* 234b; cf. Plat. *Laws* 688c, e.

191 Stalley, op. cit. 9, H. Görgemanns, *Beiträge zur Interpretation von Platons Nomoi*, e.g., 69-71, 105-6.

192 Cf. Görgemanns, op. cit. 107 f., E. Rawson, *The Spartan Tradition in European Thought*, 69.

193 pp. 214 ff. and 263 f.

194 p. 214; *Panath.* 251-3

195 Powell, *Athens and Sparta*, 220 f.

196 Cf. the unsolicited, friendly but exasperated criticism offered to the Spartan commander Alkidas by other Greeks during the Peloponnesian War; Thuc. III 32 2.

197 *Panath.* 251-3..

198 See Fisher, this volume pp. 366 ff. and G.L. Huxley, *Early Sparta*, 127.

IX

ARISTOTLE ON SPARTA

Eckart Schütrumpf

I

The most extensive treatment of Sparta by Aristotle that we still have is found in *Pol.* 2 9. Aristotle's account is an important source on the Spartan constitution which is very often used in historical studies of ancient Sparta. Here two issues have to be distinguished: one is the value of Aristotle's account as a historical source; the second concerns the proper understanding of Aristotle's remarks on Sparta. My goal in this paper is quite modest, namely to address some of the problems raised by modern scholars about the Aristotelian account of Sparta.

In order to understand the intention behind his treatment of Sparta in *Pol.* 2 9, it is necessary to discuss the purpose of *Pol.* 2. In ch. 1 (1260b27 ff.) Aristotle outlines his plan to examine the political community which is best for those who can live as far as possible according to their wishes (ζῆν ὅτι μάλιστα κατ' εὐχὴν). It might be worthwhile mentioning that equivalents to the phrase κατ' εὐχὴν had been used by Plato in the *Republic* several times, but in a negative context; Plato repeatedly insists that his state is not a dream,¹ whereas Aristotle's state should come as near to the ideal as possible. This comparison shows that the standard Aristotle applies in *Pol.* 2 when discussing states enjoying a good constitution and theoretical constitutions appearing to be good is actually stricter than that of Plato in the *Republic*. It is not surprising that Aristotle gives as the reason for this investigation that none of the existing constitutions, be they real such as

Sparta, or constructed by theorists like Plato, is satisfactory in his judgment.

Such a critical attitude toward others who wrote before him in the same field, as displayed in the first chapter of *Pol.* 2 1, is an obvious feature not only in the *Politics* where 1 1 begins with a criticism of Plato's *Politikos* but in Aristotle's other works as well: *Rhetoric* 1 1² is critical of previous authors of handbooks on rhetoric. *Physics* 1 2 ff.,³ *De anima*,⁴ *Metaphysics* 1 3 ff., *De generatione et corruptione* 1 1 2, and very likely *Περὶ Φιλοσοφίας*⁵ contain a critical overview of theories by his predecessors⁶ right at the outset of the first books.

Although the critical spirit expressed in *Pol.* 2 1 represents a typically Aristotelian feature, in this particular case of a study of constitutions such a critical approach is new as far as we can judge. There is no example prior to Aristotle of a critical examination dealing both with existing states and proposed utopias. How should one explain this? For an answer to this question one has to look at the purpose of Aristotle's study expressed in *Pol.* 2 1, namely to serve as preparation for his treatment of the best political community. This plan is executed in Books 7 and 8. In the description of this ideal state we find a great number of references to Sparta and/or Crete, most of them adversely critical.⁷ Relating criticism of these two constitutions to the construction of an ideal state as expressed in the program of *Pol.* 2 1 is a feature of his treatment of the best state in Book 7. If one looks at this from the perspective of the tradition of Greek political theory, one finds criticism of Sparta and Crete to be an integral part of the construction of a theoretical constitution already in Plato's *Laws*. There are so many motives in common between the *Laws* and Arist. *Pol.* 7⁸ that it is reasonable to argue that in his approach in *Pol.* 7, Aristotle is actually following Plato's *Laws* to a large degree. However, whereas in Book 7 the many references to Spartan or Cretan institutions are interspersed within the description of the institutions of the best state and form a foil for the construction of Aristotle's ideal state, Book 2 isolates the criticism. It concentrates on the flaws of the constitutions under consideration there.

There does not seem to be any previous model for Aristotle's method in *Pol.* 2 of dealing critically with existing states and also including in this criticism proposed theoretical models of a best state. Unfortunately we do not have enough material from earlier literature on constitutions. Those of Kritias were not written in a critical spirit: Xenophon cites his judgment on Sparta, namely that it seems to have the finest constitution.⁹ The Pseudo-Xenophontic *Athenian Constitution* of the 'Old Oligarch' is unique in that it expresses clearly the author's rejection of democracy while at the same time proving that everything the Athenians do actually strengthens the *dēmos*. This is not a model for the Aristotelian approach as summed up at the end of 2 9: 'these then are the flaws of the Spartan constitution which one might blame most' (1271b18).

The most likely explanation of the content of *Pol.* 2 which comprises a criticism both of utopias and existing states is as follows: the nucleus of *Pol.* 2 is the plan to examine a best state not just *per se* but in its relation to existing states such as Sparta and Crete. We can be confident that in this particular approach Aristotle was following Plato's *Laws*. What is new compared to his Platonic model is that in *Pol.* 2 we no longer have some scattered references to Sparta or Crete but instead an independent, systematic study of the two constitutions in their own right. To the critical treatment of Sparta and Crete which he found in Plato's *Laws* Aristotle added his customary feature of criticizing predecessors of the subject matter he is investigating.

The combination of these two issues results in an ambivalence in the Aristotelian relationship to Plato which can also be detected elsewhere. While the method of studying a best constitution with reference to Sparta and Carthage goes back virtually to Plato's *Laws*,¹⁰ Aristotle added to this the criticism of ideal states as conceived by Plato himself and by others. *Pol.* 2 partly follows Plato's approach of developing a model constitution on the foil of existing states, partly includes Plato's theoretical state among those subjected to the severest criticism.

II

The earliest reference to Sparta and Crete in Aristotle occurs in the *Protrepticus* where he describes the method a philosopher uses. The philosopher differs, for example, from a bad lawgiver who simply drafts an imitation of other human constitutions such as those of Sparta or Crete (B 49 Dü). This passage has been used by W. Jaeger to set a date for *Pol. 2*: it was published shortly after 345 but is in its core older because it rejects Sparta and Crete as model constitutions in the same way as the *Protrepticus* does.¹¹ The *Protrepticus*, however, does not contain a criticism of any Spartan and Cretan institutions. All Aristotle does is reject a method of imitating human affairs instead of using what is eternal and unchanging as a standard (B 50). In contrast to this, in *Pol. 2* Aristotle plans to deal with an ideal constitution by referring to existing states, not to something eternal. In *Pol. 2* he has applied the very method which he has denounced in the *Protrepticus*. And while there are many points of the Spartan constitution which deserve criticism according to *Pol. 2* 9, there are nevertheless quite a few aspects he actually approves of (cf. 1270b17–20). This is quite different from the viewpoint which we encounter in the *Protrepticus*. I do not find anywhere in the *Politics* a concept of political philosophy resembling that of the *Protrepticus*. The *Protrepticus* cannot be used to set a date for the writing of *Pol. 2*.

The end of *EN* 10, 1181b15 ff. forms a transition to the *Politics*. The first topic among the subjects to be studied is stated: 'first we will study in some detail whether any predecessors have written something of merit.'¹² This remark is most easily referred to *Pol. 2*. However, because of the term 'written' – or closer 'said' (εἰρηται), some scholars¹³ have expressed the view that when Aristotle wrote the last section of *EN*, he was thinking only of the ideal states as construed by political theorists and not of real constitutions such as Sparta or Crete. This again would support the assumption made by others, namely that chapters 9–12 of *Pol. 2* are later additions written during his second stay

in Athens, when under his guidance the collection of constitutions was being compiled. The section on Sparta and Crete, therefore, would be based on his historical studies of constitutions.

For an assessment of the chapter in *Pol.* 2 dealing with Sparta it is important to ascertain whether in fact this is a later addition, presupposing the collection of constitutions which was compiled in the Peripatos during Aristotle's second stay in Athens. This attempt at setting a date for *Pol.* 2 9 is like solving an equation with two unknown elements, that is to say to determine the unknown date of *Pol.* 2 by basing it on the – for the most part¹⁴ – unknown *Constitution of the Lacedaimonians*. If we assume for *Lac. Pol.* a similar structure to that of *Ath. Pol.* (i.e. in the first part a historical overview, and in the second half a very detailed treatment of the political institutions), then it is very unlikely that, in his criticism of Sparta in *Pol.* 2, Aristotle used *Lac. Pol.* In his characterization of the powers the various institutions enjoy in Sparta, he is completely vague. He states that the ephors have authority over the highest matters (1270b7, cf. b28), just as the Elders are in charge for life of important decisions (b39) – however just *what* their powers are is never stated.¹⁵ This does not indicate much research into history and political institutions of Sparta and is not in character with what one knows from the *Ath. Pol.* and would expect if the *Lac. Pol.* had been the basis of this chapter.¹⁶ In addition to this, in a few details there seems to be a discrepancy between the fragments of *Lac. Pol.* and *Pol.* 2.¹⁷ And then there are omissions in *Pol.* 2 9 because Aristotle ignores the role of the public assembly completely. Andrewes¹⁸ came to the conclusion that *Pol.* 2 9 was published before Aristotle had a detailed knowledge of the early fourth-century historical accounts of Sparta: 'These older sections of the work [i.e. *Pol.* 2 9] were concerned more with the merits of current theory about Sparta, especially the theories that Aristotle encountered in Athens, than with research into the facts.'¹⁹

Leaving aside here the explanation of the last section of *EN* discussed above, *Pol.* 2, as we have it, does not allow the view

that chapters 9–11 are a later addition.²⁰ Not only does the introductory chapter mention existing states as the first topic to be studied, but the two parts of *Pol.* 2, namely chapters 2–8 and 9 ff., resemble each other closely (e.g., in the aspects under which they examine the constitutions). The criticism of political theorists in chapters 2–8 has its counterpart in chapters 9 ff. where the criticism is directed against the lawgiver who first made these arrangements. Both existing constitutions and theoretical ideal states are the creation of historical personalities whose accomplishments, or rather failures, Aristotle evaluates. And in his treatment of Plato's two model states, Aristotle refers more than once to Sparta and Crete,²¹ as he refers in the chapter on Sparta (2 9, 1271b1) to Plato's *Laws* which he had discussed earlier in chapter 6. Modern conceptions might differ on this matter, but Aristotle does not view existing states as so completely different from theoretical attempts to write a best constitution. This attitude is not surprising since his own treatment of a best constitution was, among other things, to be based on a critical study of existing states which enjoy a good constitution.

In my view, *Pol.* 2 as a whole²² was written in the context Aristotle mentions in ch. 1, namely as a part of his own study of a best state, which is that of Books 7 and 8. Traditionally as an argument for dating these two books it has been pointed out that Aristotle follows here in so many aspects Plato's *Laws* that he probably wrote under the immediate influence of that Platonic work. Plato, for his part, must have done some studies on Spartan and Cretan institutions. It is most likely that Aristotle's knowledge of Sparta and Crete as we find it in *Pol.* 2 and Books 7 and 8 goes back to the same research on these constitutions, undertaken in the Academy around 350 BC.²³

III

A number of scholars believe that there are strong inconsistencies in the various evaluations of Sparta in Aristotle's works – not

only in the *Politics* itself, but also in the relationship of the *Politics* to *EN* or to *Protrepticus* – inconsistencies which have been perceived as a problem difficult to explain. I have selected here for analysis four opinions regarding this matter because I believe that they cover basically the different approaches possible.

1) Ollier presented in the Aristotle chapter (IX) of his monograph²⁴ the opinion that the positive and negative judgments by Aristotle on Sparta were inconsistent.²⁵ Side by side one could find both very harsh criticism of Sparta and remarks of rather flattering admiration. Ollier talks about two Spartas, 'deux Sparte' (315; 318–320; 325) that Aristotle was unable to reconcile with one another because, in his mind, two tendencies were conflicting here: on the one side there was the idealistic theorist who followed Plato's *Laws* when using Sparta as his model in constructing the best state in *Pol.* 7–8, which is an imitation of the Spartan constitution. On the other side there was the realistic observer who pointed out without prejudice the real weaknesses in Sparta.

Ollier's view is open to criticism: in the *Laws* Plato did not portray an idealistic picture of Sparta; a rather significant part of the Aristotelian criticism is actually taken over from Plato. Although Ollier is aware of the effect of Plato's criticism on Aristotle, he does not take this into account in his interpretation of the ambivalent judgments of Sparta which he claims to find in Aristotle's account. Moreover, the Aristotelian judgment on Sparta in the 'idealistic books' dealing with the best state on the one hand and in the 'empirical books' on the other is quite contrary to Ollier's presentation: in the study of the best state one finds repeatedly remarks which subject the foundation of the Spartan constitution to fundamental criticism,²⁶ to even more severe criticism than in *Pol.* 2. On the other hand, in *Pol.* 4 9 (1294b18–34) Aristotle praises in great detail the success of the mixed constitution of Sparta and in 4 11 (1296a20) he names Lykurgus as one of the best lawgivers.

2) These objections of method against Ollier, namely that in his interpretation the Aristotelian remarks are overstated and as such are then presented as inconsistent with one another, must be brought against Cloché²⁷ even more strongly. Drawing on the same material used by Ollier, Cloché arrives at very much the same conclusion: there are not only two different presentations of the Spartan institutions in Aristotle's *Politics*, but these are 'nettement opposés' – clearly opposed to each other. In contrast to Ollier, however, who wanted to explain the 'contradiction' by the tension between two positions taken by Aristotle, that of the Platonising idealist versus that of the historical-critical realist, Cloché feels that it was Aristotle's intention to represent all aspects of the Spartan constitution in as complete a form as possible, but without paying the slightest attention to the contradictions that had to arise. The consequence of this interpretation would hence be that Aristotle is an uncritical compiler who has thrown together, quite oblivious to the inner logic of his remarks, information both to the credit and the discredit of Sparta.

In my opinion, however, Cloché's assertions of inconsistency can be traced back to standards from outside which ignore the theoretical premises of the political theory of Aristotle and contemporaries. Cloché emphasizes that in *Pol.* 2 9²⁸ Aristotle stresses in particular greed for riches in Sparta; this, Cloché believes, contradicts the constitutional ranking of Sparta at 4 7, 1293b16, where the city is classified as a mixture only of democracy and aristocracy without any consideration given to wealth. Yet greed and wealth, mainly of the women in Sparta (2 9, 1270a23–5), did not affect Sparta's character as a mixed constitution. The oligarchic element in a mixed constitution consisted in wealth and riches as a requirement for appointment to office (4 5, 1292a39–b10). But even the richest women in Sparta had no access whatsoever to any office. The ephors were seriously greedy, as a result of their poverty (2 9, 1270b9–13). However, their greed did not count as an element of oligarchy, rather the reverse. Their office gave the Spartan constitution a democratic

preponderance (2 9, 1270b13–17). There is no contradiction between the accounts in *Pol.* 2 9 and 4 7.

Another argument of Cloché concerns a more fundamental issue. In *Pol.* 2 9 Aristotle praises the ephorate because the ephors, holders of the most important office, are elected from the entire *dēmos* and, because of this, the office holds the constitution together and strengthens it (1270b17 ff.). On the other hand the eligibility of every citizen brings even the poor people into office who, because of their corruptibility, pose a danger for the whole state (b8 ff.). Cloché regards this as a contradiction.²⁹ A different impression arises if one studies Aristotle's remarks about the ephorate against the background of contemporary political theory. In his *Areopagiticus*, Isocrates turned against radical democracy and demanded a return to the constitution of the forefathers: in those days the *dēmos*, like a tyrant, appointed the holders of state offices and held control over them; although the most competent men held office, the constitution gave to the *dēmos* sovereign power over them.³⁰ It is very much the same principle, namely that the *dēmos* must hold the most important political positions, which Aristotle finds realized in the ephors' office in Sparta; that does not hinder him in criticizing the much-too-broad mandatory powers of the ephors, their almost tyrannical authority that upsets the balance of the institutions (2 9, 1270b13–14). While Isocrates had justified the stability of the constitution of the forefathers, which is also a kind of mixed constitution, in part because the *dēmos* played a role which was rather similar to that of a tyrant, for Aristotle a plenitude of power as Isocrates found with the members of the *dēmos* is detrimental to the constitution. Aristotle is able to accept the fundamental principle that the *dēmos* must receive the highest powers, but this still leaves him ample room for the criticism that Sparta has overdone this principle³¹ – the two positions can be reconciled with each other. The sequence of arguments in the section 2 10, 1272a27 ff., where Aristotle lists in direct proximity the disadvantages of the Spartan institution of the ephorate ('any person at all can hold this office') and the advantages (of

committing the *dēmos* to the constitution) leads us to assume that Aristotle did not view this as a contradiction, but rather felt both sides could be separated from each other. Here, as elsewhere, Aristotle did not throw the baby out with the bath water. He avoided sweeping judgments, recognized instead by subtle distinctions the positive things without glossing over the negative aspects. Obviously an improvement in the election process³² would in his view offer some relief and could have prevented any given person from being able to hold such an office.

In *Pol.* 2 9, as elsewhere, in his political attitude towards the *dēmos* Aristotle is walking a very fine line between on the one hand the viewpoint that one must allow the *dēmos* political participation³³ and, on the other, efforts to keep this participation within limits so that its impact on the state causes no harm³⁴ – his treatment of Sparta is thus not a special case. The question then arises whether the reformist middle path which Aristotle usually chooses – to maintain or strengthen the positive aspects, to weaken or eliminate the negative ones – appears realistic to us politically. There is reason to doubt that the compromises Aristotle proposes are always viable, in particular one could question whether the solutions he recommends are even acceptable to the *dēmos*.³⁵ In any event, Aristotle thought he was suggesting solutions that would satisfy the *dēmos* without impairing the quality of government.³⁶

3) R.A. de Laix³⁷ explained the different judgments on Sparta in Aristotle's *Politics* by assuming a development of the Aristotelian attitude to Sparta: according to de Laix, in *Pol.* 2 Aristotle passes completely negative judgments on Sparta while in *Pol.* 4 9, 1294b16 ff. Sparta is treated in more complimentary terms.³⁸ In contrast to this, Aristotle, according to de Laix, makes it quite clear in *Pol.* 7 14 and 15 and in 8 4 that a flaw inherent in the constitution led to Sparta's decline. De Laix draws the conclusion: the judgment on Sparta in *Pol.* 2 and 7–8 is 'radically different from that in Book 4'; there Aristotle praises the Spartan constitution while referring to its idealized original form.

Quite the opposite is true in Books 2, 7 and 8: 'his more factual approach leads him to opposite conclusions, stressing primarily the degenerate Sparta of his own times.' *Pol.* 5 is placed somewhere inbetween. Whereas R. Weil³⁹ denied a contradiction in Aristotle's judgments on Sparta, de Laix (24 n. 3) stresses the 'bifurcation' of the Aristotelian analysis of Sparta: on the one hand, in *Pol.* 4, there is 'approval of the early Lycurgan state', on the other, in *Pol.* 2, 7 and 8, 'criticism of the decadent Sparta of his own day'.⁴⁰

De Laix finds the reasons for this 'evolution' in Aristotle's views of Sparta in the fact that Aristotle is dependent upon Plato and other theorists in *Pol.* 4 9, whereas at a later period, after compiling the collection of constitutions, in our case *Lac. Pol.*, he developed a better knowledge of the Spartan constitution. On the basis of this collection, he then condemned the contemporary Sparta in *Pol.* 2, 5, 7 and 8. On the chronology of these accounts about Sparta, de Laix concludes that *Pol.* 4 contains the earliest step in the Aristotelian attitude towards Sparta, *Pol.* 2 and 7–8, in contrast, contain the latest one. De Laix does not use this conclusion to overturn the chronological account of the books of the *Politics* according to the analytical method, such as that by Jaeger which directly contradicts de Laix's viewpoint of when the Aristotelian reports on Sparta in the various books were written. Instead he comes to the conclusion that Aristotle inserted later additions into earlier parts. The number of such revised parts in *Politics* should be regarded as much greater than is generally acknowledged. The different evaluations of Sparta would be proof of the continuous revision of the text of the *Politics* by Aristotle himself.

Yet de Laix's own remarks contradict his conclusions outlined here. That Aristotle shares the criticism in *Pol.* 7–8 of Sparta's one-sided approach to war or lust for power with Plato to whom he specifically refers (2 9, 1271a41 ff.), is a fact de Laix is aware of (21 f.). It is hard to understand just why he then traces this criticism of Sparta in *Pol.* 7–8 back to a deeper knowledge of the Spartan institutions which Aristotle allegedly gained from

studies undertaken for his collection of constitutions.⁴¹ This is all the more incomprehensible since in *Pol.* 7–8 we learn nothing about the institutions of Sparta. Just the opposite, in *Pol.* 7 Aristotle judges the constitutions according to the rank of their goals, i.e. their contribution to happiness.⁴² Sparta is the historical example that he subjects to an investigation guided by these principles and finds wanting. The remarks about Sparta in *Pol.* 7–8 are by no means sections inserted at a later time that do not fit into the actual context of these books. One cannot separate the individual *sections* about Sparta in *Pol.* 7–8 so easily from the main bulk of these books and assume a different time of writing – it is even quite difficult to see why Aristotle would insert the many remarks on Sparta at a later time into quite different places in these books.

Moreover, de Laix also assumes that the earlier Aristotle refers to Lykurgos's idealized Sparta, while the later, critical Aristotle refers to the decline of Sparta in the most recent past, criticizing the Spartans because they had renounced the ideals of the city founder. Yet this explanation, on which E. David elaborates in detail (see below, pp. 338 f.), is not valid for *Pol.* 2 9 because in this chapter it is the *lawgiver himself* who is blamed for the mistakes in the Spartan constitution: from the very beginning it was set up wrong although only much later the worst results became apparent and were recognized. And de Laix traces back to Plato's *Laws* 7, 806c3, Aristotle's peculiarity in 2 9 of not directing his criticism by name against Lykurgos in most cases, but less definitely against 'the lawgiver'. He himself is admitting the dependence of *Pol.* 2 9 on Plato, and not on later studies of the Spartan constitution.

De Laix is too sweeping in his view that Sparta is evaluated purely negatively in *Pol.* 2. He overlooks the obvious recognition of the ephorate and its contribution to the stability of the Spartan constitution (9 1270b17–26). De Laix, however, finds in 2 6, 1265b33 f., 'the only approval of the Spartan system found in this book'. There Aristotle quotes an opinion held by many, namely that the best constitution should be a mixture of

all constitutions – a criterion they find met in the Spartan constitution. While Aristotle does not claim to give his own view with this remark, one should note that this recognition of the quality of Sparta's mixed constitution in 2 6 is based on the principle which he repeats in his definition of an aristocratic mixed constitution at *Pol.* 4 7 (1293b14). According to this chapter Sparta's mixed constitution does combine aristocracy and democracy. Later at 4 9 he recognizes the oligarchic element in the section (1294b31ff.) where he praises Sparta as a model of a mixed constitution. This is by no means an entirely different evaluation compared to 2 9, as de Laix surmises.⁴³ The only difference between the presentation of the Spartan mixed constitution in *Pol.* 2 9 and 4 9 is that in 4 9 the negative assessment of the office holders is missing.⁴⁴ But this does correspond entirely to the theoretical position taken in *Pol.* 4: here the prevention of political tensions alone is a proof of the good quality of a constitution. A lessening in the tensions of the relations between the groups can be achieved either by giving the more conservative portion of the rich or poor the political power, or by permitting both to participate in holding power through a mixed constitution. The individual quality of the office holder does not play any role at all in this. Instead, all the groups have a 'political quality' that depends on their living conditions, more precisely on their need to earn a living. The more they must work, the less time they have to engage in political activities and the more legitimate the constitution must be. The attention to the individual qualification of the office holder in *Pol.* 2 9 is, in contrast, traditional and reminds the reader of Platonic requirements, however, it cannot be explained specifically as the result of Aristotelian studies on the history of constitutions. Rather Aristotle moves farthest away from this tradition when he gives credit in *Pol.* 4, more particularly in *Pol.* 6, to an efficient organization of the political *institutions* on its own/by itself for creating or enhancing the stability of the state; in these books he demonstrates a precise knowledge of all possible political institutions in various states, undoubtedly gained by his study of constitutions.

De Laix makes use of the – always questionable – *argumentum e silentio*: if we do not read anything critical about Sparta in *Politics* 4, this must mean that at this time Aristotle is not aware of anything that deserved criticism. However, reading Plato's *Laws* gave Aristotle all the material for criticism he wanted and did use; there is no need to postulate subsequent historical study of the Spartan constitution. De Laix seems to question Aristotle's right to treat Sparta in a discriminating way, i.e. to criticize the principal flaw in its constitutional arrangement and still consider the mixed constitution to be exemplary. But it was not Aristotle's attitude towards Sparta that had changed; rather in *Pol.* 4 he was concentrating only on one aspect of the Spartan constitution, its interior political stability, just as he emphasizes in this book (4 11) stability as the distinctive mark of the best state for most of the people.⁴⁵ With regard to political stability, it appears already from *Pol.* 2, chapters 6 and 9, that for Aristotle the Spartan constitution was successful.⁴⁶ If something is different in *Politics* 2 or 4, then it is the description of the mixed constitution. In 2 9, 1270b21, it consisted of the three *institutions*, kingship, *gerousia*, ephorate, or of the three *groups*, kings, *gerontes*, *dēmos*,⁴⁷ whereas in 4 7, 1293b16 ff., in agreement with the viewpoint of the 'parts' of state from *Politics* 4, it is formed from different *classes* of the population: *dēmos* and the good; therefore in 4 9, 1294b13 ff., the kingship is missing in the description of the mixed constitution, the groups forming the mixed constitution are the poor and rich.⁴⁸ This is a real change in the way Aristotle analyses the elements of the Spartan constitution. The particular approach in *Pol.* 4 is expressed by the fact that Aristotle turns in 4 1, 1288b40, against the admirers and imitators of Sparta because they ignore the fact that a constitution is conditioned by specific political and social circumstances. However, this new approach, which is not a feature of his treatment of Sparta in *Pol.* 2, does not change his judgment on any aspect of the Spartan constitution.

I do not find any of the treatments of Sparta discussed so far to

be sound in method. In Sparta Aristotle finds both light and dark sides; but in *Pol.* 2 9 he has, as indicated in the programme of that book in 2 1, mainly adverse critical intentions. So he says at the end of the chapter, he has treated matters 'that one might particularly criticize' (1271b18). This was not intended to be a complete, final judgment on Sparta; and in spite of the critical aims, he admits nonetheless in this chapter that Sparta is a well organized community because of its mixed constitution – he had already pointed out exemplary arrangements of its institutions earlier in this book, in 2 6. All the modern comments discussed here take away in principle Aristotle's right to give a very differentiated and discriminating picture of Sparta. They tend to make him decide between simply damning and praising her. A reference to Aristotle's attitude towards Plato's *Laws* can prove that such an approach is wrong: after reading *Pol.* 2 6, one could indeed have the impression that Aristotle criticizes indifferently everything about Plato's *Laws*. However one has to take into account that he speaks positively about that work in 2 7 (1266b5) and 9 (1271b1). The same is true for the treatment of Sparta in *Politics* 2: in contrast to the criticism in chapter 9 which leaves little good to be said about Sparta, in the chapters of *Politics* 2 dealing with Plato Sparta is used to demonstrate that already here in Sparta the mistakes Plato made were avoided: 2 5, 1263b41; cf. a35; 6, 1265b31 ff.⁴⁹ On the other hand, the works by Ollier, Cloché and de Laix just discussed contend that through the definite criticism in 2 9 the basis was removed for the positive comments in *Pol.* 4; and because there were only approving comments in *Pol.* 4 9 (or *EN*), the assertion is made that Aristotle in the meantime has given up the critical stance from *Pol.* 2. These modern authors do not take into account that the criticism in *Pol.* 2 9 was directed against quite different aspects of Sparta's political system. The underlying assumption is that Aristotle's judgment has to be balanced in every individual comment. However, there is nothing forcing Aristotle to refer, for instance, to the greed for wealth on the part of Spartan women in his treatment of the exemplary mixture of her

constitution in *Pol.* 4 9. And there was never an opportunity in his criticism of the one-sided education in Sparta of *Pol.* 7–8 to refer, for the sake of balance, to Sparta's successful political system. Aristotle did not even list the political institutions of his own best state there, but rather was mainly interested in the quality of the class that should be entrusted with political duties. The conclusion that because of this, at the time Aristotle wrote *Pol.* 7, he must have held a negative viewpoint on the Spartan mixed constitution as well, not just of the one-sided education, does not hold water. In all of the other books of the *Politics* I can only find judgments about Sparta that he also had in Book 2. But not everywhere in the *Politics* do they occur in the context of such a detailed presentation, instead they tend to be limited to the parts and aspects of the constitution on which he is concentrating. Hence they appear at times somewhat one-sided; contradictions they most certainly are not.

4) E. David,⁵⁰ who also argues that there are contradictory judgments by Aristotle on Sparta, has used the 'time factor' as an explanation for this. Aristotle is supposedly referring in his critical remarks to aspects of contemporary Sparta.

According to *Pol.* 2 9, 1269a30, Aristotle wants to examine Sparta under two aspects, first in terms of her relation to the best state, then her relation to the specific goal of her own constitution. De Laix had already supported the viewpoint that under the second aspect the historical dimension was introduced because Aristotle wanted to investigate how the present constitution had abandoned the old ideal; David argues along similar lines. But the wording of 1269a30 ff. rules out this interpretation: Aristotle formulates both objectives of his investigation as follows: 'firstly whether its legislative enactments are good or bad relative to the best order, secondly whether its laws are at variance with the principles and character of the constitution which they have set as their goal' (...μία μὲν εἴ τι καλῶς ἢ μὴ καλῶς πρὸς τὴν ἀρίστην νενομοθέτηται τάξιν, ἑτέρα δ' εἴ τι πρὸς τὴν ὑπόθεσιν καὶ τὸν τρόπον ὑπεναντίως τῆς προκειμένης αὐτοῖς

πολιτείας). Both aspects of investigation have one thing in common: the *existing* laws or institutions – the word *νενομοθέτηται* is the one verb belonging to both parts of this programme of study; as a perfect it refers to laws that were once enacted and are still valid.⁵¹ David's view that Aristotle is comparing in the objectives of the investigation the *original* character of the Spartan constitution with the *present* conditions cannot be reconciled with the text: Aristotle is dealing with one single law or constitution, the one that is valid and is judging it by means of two different criteria.

Cloch  has stressed a contradiction in Aristotle's treatment of the ephorate at *Pol.* 2 9: on the one hand the philosopher praises this institution because the ephors who are elected from the entire *d mos* keep the constitution together and strengthen it (1270b17 ff.); on the other hand the eligibility of everybody brings even poor people into office who, because of their corruptibility, pose a danger for the whole state (b8 ff.). David, 73 ff., would like to resolve this contradiction by proposing that the corruptibility to which the ephors are susceptible (1270b9 f.) be understood in the light of the socio-economic situation of contemporary Sparta that Aristotle had discussed in the preceding section. The unequal distribution of property which Aristotle described at 1270a15 ff. and which had the afore-mentioned effects on the character of the ephors was 'a problem which certainly belongs to the fourth century bc' – David associates it with the Rhetra of Epitadeus, the only reference to which we find in Plutarch, a source of questionable value on this matter.⁵² But David has ignored the fact that at *Pol.* 5 7, 1306b38 ff., Aristotle himself named Tyrtaios as evidence for the crass differences in wealth in Sparta with their politically and socially negative consequences – David does not quote this passage. Plutarch's view that the imbalance in wealth arose in Sparta after the Peloponnesian War as a result of Epitadeus' rhetra is incompatible with Aristotle's account who described the contrast between rich and poor already in the sixth century bc.⁵³ And the quotation from Aristotle's *Rhetoric* 2. 23, 1398b17, 'The Spartans

enjoyed happier conditions as long as they held onto Lykurgos' laws',⁵⁴ does not support the view that Aristotle praised Sparta's past, but criticized the conditions of the present, because Aristotle there is quoting Alkidamas, not giving his own viewpoint. And finally, even if Aristotle had in mind, as the lawgiver who created the ephorate, not Lykurgos, but Theopompos (*Pol.* 2 9, 1270b19 f.),⁵⁵ we would still find ourselves in the seventh century. It may well be that Aristotle described Sparta's problems in terms of how they affected his contemporaries, but it is certainly incorrect to imply that he wanted them to be understood as a result of a historical development so that a double reference, namely to the original constitution and the present condition, could explain the (alleged) incongruence of his judgments. That Aristotle, when introducing his criticism of the Spartan common messes, directs that criticism towards the lawmaker who *first* created them,⁵⁶ directly contradicts this assumption.

Far from being a 'unitarian' in the explanation of Aristotle's *Politics*, I nevertheless believe that there is no contradiction in his presentation of Sparta in that work. If Aristotle received additional material on this constitution at the time when a collection of so many constitutions was made in the Peripatos, this new information did not change his judgment on the Spartan constitution nor did it have the effect of creating inconsistencies in his view about Sparta in the *Politics*. This result might not come as too much of a surprise. The issues he discusses about Sparta are determined more by theoretical attempts, as those of Plato,⁵⁷ to describe Sparta's political system in terms of a mixed constitution than by historical studies on the working of its institutions.

Generally speaking, Aristotle's account of the Spartan constitution in *Pol.* 2 9 is not based on a concept of historical development. Aristotle deals with contemporary Sparta whose numerous problems he traces back to the lawgiver who first introduced them. Whereas in other passages in the *Politics* Aristotle employs the concept of historical change,⁵⁸ he does not use it in 2 9. While this is important for the correct assessment of his account

of Sparta in *Pol.* 2, the modern historian dealing with Sparta cannot simply rely on Aristotle's approach for the reconstruction of Sparta's history. He has to be aware that Aristotle chose a model for his view on Sparta while contemporaries opted for a different paradigm: Ephoros, for example, was a harsh critic of contemporary Sparta while at the same time extolling Sparta's past and in particular the accomplishments of the lawgiver Lykurgos.⁵⁹ Xenophon in his assessment of the Spartan constitution followed similar lines. Accordingly, it becomes the more important to stress the different approach taken by Aristotle in his account of the Spartan constitution in *Pol.* 2 9.

Notes

- 1 Plat. *Rep.* 5 450d; 456b12; 6 499c4; 7.540d2. Plato stresses that his state should be possible: 5 457c2; 466d6; 471c6; 472b1; 473c4; 6 499d.
- 2 1 1, 1354a11; b16; b25 ff.; 1355a19.
- 3 I. Düring, *Aristoteles, Darstellung und Interpretation seines Denkens* (Heidelberg 1966) 226 f.; 230, cf. *ibid.* n. 293 reference to *Top.* 1 14, 105b12 ff.; F. Dirlmeier, *Aristoteles, Nikomachische Ethik* 8th edn (Berlin/Darmstadt 1983) (= Aristoteles, Werke in deutscher Übersetzung, Bd. 6) 266, n. 5, 3.
- 4 1 2, 403b20 ff., cf. the similar expression for the goal of his study in *Pol.* 2 1, 1260b32.
- 5 W. Jaeger, *Aristoteles. Grundlegung einer Geschichte seiner Entwicklung* (Berlin 1923) 127–8.
- 6 One can also compare Aristotle's rejection of Plato's theory of forms in *EN* 1 4, 1096a11 ff.
- 7 Sparta 7 2, 1324b7–9; 14, 1333b12–16; 15, 1334a36–b4; Crete 7 2, 1324b7–9.
- 8 E. Barker, *Greek Political Theory. Plato and his Predecessors* (1918, repr. 1957) 340, n. 1; 380–2; W. Theiler, 'Bau und Zeit der Aristotelischen Politik', *Mus.Helv.* 9 (1952) 65 ff.;

- E.N. Tigerstedt, *The Legend of Sparta in Classical Antiquity* vol. 1 (Stockholm 1965) 301; E. Schütrumpf, *Die Analyse der Polis durch Aristoteles* (Amsterdam 1980 = *Studien zur Antiken Philosophie* 10) 63 ff.
- 9 *Hell.* 2 3 34: καλλίστη μὲν γὰρ δήπου δοκεῖ πολιτεία εἶναι ἡ Λακεδαιμονίων.
- 10 A large part of the Aristotelian criticism of Sparta follows Plato, cf. Tigerstedt vol. I, 291 f.
- 11 W. Jaeger, *Aristoteles*, 300, similarly Dirlmeier, 292, note to *EN* 24F, 4. Going beyond Jaeger: A. Stigen, *The Structure of Aristotle's Thought: an Introduction to the Study of Aristotle's writings* (Oslo 1966) 298. Only R.A. Gauthier and J.Y. Jolif, *Aristote. L'Éthique à Nicomaque* vol. II (Paris 1958–9) 904 note to *EN* 1180a24 f., interpret this section of the *Protr.* as praise of the constitutions mentioned there.
- 12 πρῶτον μὲν οὖν εἴ τι κατὰ μέρος εἴρηται καλῶς ὑπὸ τῶν προγενεστέρων πειραθῶμεν ἐπελθεῖν.
- 13 W. D. Ross, *Aristotelis Politica*, (Oxford 1957) praef. ix; id. 'The development of Aristotle's thought' in I. Düring and G.E.L. Owen (eds), *Aristotle and Plato in the Mid-fourth Century* (Göteborg 1960) 8.
- 14 For the fragments of the *Spartan Constitution* see V. Rose, *Aristotelis qui ferebantur Librorum Fragmenta* (Leipzig 1886, repr. 1967) fr. 532–46.
- 15 *Pol.* 3 1, 1275b8 ff., gives more detailed information on Sparta.
- 16 Asserting 'that Aristotle should be taken seriously as a historian' (D. Whitehead, 'Norms of citizenship in ancient Greece' in A. Molho, K. Raaflaub and J. Emlen (eds), *City States in Classical Antiquity and Medieval Italy* (Stuttgart 1991) 137, does not take into account that at times Aristotle's remarks on historical issues are not based on historical studies.
- 17 J. Keaney, 'Hignett's *HAC* and the authorship of the *Athenaion politeia*', *LCM* 5 (1980) 51–6; E. Schütrumpf, *Aristoteles Politik Buch II–III, übersetzt und erläutert* (Berlin/Darmstadt

- 1991 = *Aristoteles Werke in Deutscher Übersetzung* vol. 9, Part II), notes on *Pol.* 2 9, 1270a18; b7.
- 18 A. Andrewes, 'The government of classical Sparta' in *Ancient Society and Institutions. Studies presented to V. Ehrenberg on his 75th birthday* (Oxford 1967) 1–20.
- 19 Andrewes, 7; cf. Keaney, *LCM* 5 (1980) 52 f.
- 20 The case might be different for 2 12, which is either a later addition or not genuine at all. Cf. E. Schütrumpf, *Aristoteles Politik Buch II–III*, 362–9.
- 21 5, 1263a35, b 41 ff.; 1264a10, a20; 6, 1265b32, b35.
- 22 Except for ch. 12, cf. above.
- 23 Jaeger (1923) 300 f.: 'die spartanischen und kretischen Staatseinrichtungen (wurden) in der Akademie mit Vorliebe besprochen', when Plato was writing the *Laws*, 'jedenfalls schon lange vor der Politiensammlung'; cf. R. Weil, *Aristote et l'histoire. Essai sur la 'Politique'* (Paris 1960) 254.
- 24 *Le mirage spartiate. Étude sur l'idéalisation de Sparte dans l'antiquité grecque de l'origine jusqu'aux cyniques* (Paris I 1933; repr. 1973).
- 25 Ollier, 318; 'se contredisent absolument', 319, cf. 320.
- 26 See above, n. 7.
- 27 P. Cloché, 'Aristote et les institutions de Sparte', *LEC* 11 (1942) 289–313 (reprinted in P. Steinmetz (ed.), *Schriften zu den Politika des Aristoteles* (1973) 336–60).
- 28 1270a14–39, b9–13; 1271a3–5, a18, b10–17.
- 29 Cloché 299: 'incompatibilité'; 300: 'contradiction' – the same assessment forms the starting-point of an article by David, to be discussed below.
- 30 τὸν δῆμον κύριον ποιούσης 7 26 f.
- 31 1271a7 μέγα λαν, cf. *mutatis mutandis* the demand to cut back the power of kings in order to make this institution last, 5 11, 1313a18 ff.; in a25 ff. this is applied to Spartan kings.
- 32 For Aristotle's criticism of the election process cf. 2 9, 1270b26 f.

- 33 Cf. his criticism of the Cretan constitution where this is not being done: 10, 1272a39 ff.; cf. E. Schütrumpf, *Aristoteles Politik Buch II–III*, notes on *Pol.* 2 2, 1261a33.
- 34 Cf. 5 8, 1308b38 ff. on a democratic-aristocratic mixed constitution – as Sparta is: IV 7, 1293b16 ff.; cf. also E. Schütrumpf, *Die Analyse der Polis* (1980) 170 f., 189 ff.
- 35 In *Pol.* 6 4, 1318b27 ff. Aristotle states it to be useful for the democracy when the most important offices are filled by elections from the members of the wealthiest class, even if this were not to be done according to the census, but in such a way that only the most competent get these offices.
- 36 Cf. *Pol.* 3 11, in particular 1281b22 ff.
- 37 ‘Aristotle’s conception of the Spartan constitution’, *JHPH* 12 (1974) 21–30.
- 38 ‘apparent approval’; ‘the tone of this book, therefore, contrasts markedly with the more critical tone of Book 2’, de Laix, 23.
- 39 R. Weil, *Aristote et l’histoire*, (Paris 1960) 231 ff.
- 40 E. David, *Anc. Soc.* 13–14 (1982–3) 67–103, who apparently does not know de Laix’s study, tries a similar solution; see below.
- 41 ‘greater depth of material’, 25; ‘empirically based’, 29.
- 42 8, 1328a36–41; 9, 1328b33–38.
- 43 ‘radically different’, de Laix, 24; but see *Pol.* 2 9, 1270b21 ff.
- 44 de Laix (24) notes this: in *Pol.* 4 the emphasis on ‘degenerate Sparta of his own times’ is absent.
- 45 I.e. the constitution based on the middle class: 4 11, 1295b25–1296a10.
- 46 Cf. the judgment of Thuc. *Hist.* 1 18 2.
- 47 As in Tyrtaios fr. 4 West.
- 48 For this classification of the society cf. 4 3, 1289b30; 11, 1295b1–3.
- 49 These references demonstrate the connection between the sections of *Politics* that deal with theoretical models or historical constitutions.

- 50 *Anc.Soc.* 13–14 (1982–3) 67–103.
- 51 Cf. the programme of ch. 1 1, 1260b29 πολιτείας, αἷς τε χρώνται τινες.
- 52 E. Schütrumpf, 'The rhetra of Epitadeus: a Platonist's fiction', *GRBS* 28 (1987) 441–57.
- 53 The passage 1270b11, which deals with the corruptibility of the ephors, seems to contradict David's interpretation. Aristotle says: 'they have often shown this earlier and even just recently.' The corruptibility is not just a contemporary phenomenon as opposed to better conditions in the past. David (75) states: 'there had been several instances of bribery even in the past, yet the past to which he refers is not a distant one.' I would rather say: Aristotle is referring to many cases in the past, πρότερον, while the example he chooses is from the present (νῦν). I concede that πρότερον does not allow for an accurate date: at *Pol.* 3 15, 1286b7, it refers to archaic times when the constitution was still a kingship; at 8 4, 1338b24 ff., when dealing with the loss of Sparta's superiority due to the fact that her enemies took preparation for warfare more seriously, Aristotle must refer to the time between the end of the Peloponnesian War and the Spartan defeat at Leuctra in 371.
- 54 David 85.
- 55 David 72 n. 19; 81 n. 48.
- 56 2 9, 1271a26 ff.: οὐ καλῶς...νενομοθέτηται τῷ καταστήσαντι πρῶτον.
- 57 *Laws* 3, 691d8–692b1, c3–5.
- 58 E.g., 2 12, 1274a5 ff. for Athens; generally for the constitutional development cf. 3 15, 1286b8 ff.; 4 13, 1297b16 ff.
- 59 E.N. Tigerstedt, *The Legend of Sparta in Classical Antiquity*, 3 vols, (Stockholm 1965–78) vol. I, 222.

X

SPARTA RE(DE)VALUED: SOME ATHENIAN PUBLIC ATTITUDES TO SPARTA BETWEEN LEUCTRA AND THE LAMIAN WAR

N.R.E. Fisher

Isocrates' Laconizers

The most wide-ranging critique of Sparta from the corpus of the Athenian orators during the period 371–323 BC is Isocrates' long, apparently rambling and contradictory last work, the *Panathenaikos*, composed in his nineties between 342 and 339 BC. The problems of its interpretation, especially the convoluted pirouettes performed in the last third of the work, involving staged debates with a former, Laconizing, non-Athenian pupil, are considered elsewhere in this volume. I would agree with Vivienne Gray that these moves are not to be read in a fashionably deconstructionist way as an invitation to a polysemic reading of the severe criticisms of Sparta in the earlier part of the work, but rather as a rhetorical device designed to strengthen these criticisms; they are intended to warn against a failure to take them seriously, and to emphasize, in the face of major reservations to be expected in Isocrates' readership, that Sparta's contributions to Hellenic culture and moral advancement are minimal, her record in foreign policy, and her treatment of the *perioukoi*, are deplorable, and that in all respects her achievements are greatly inferior to those of Athens.¹ In this paper, I shall not consider in detail Isocrates' various treatments of the Spartan system and record, full as they are of sophistries,

contradictions and (often false) historical analyses.² I wish rather to focus on attitudes expressed in speeches delivered in the Athenian assembly and courts. But some consideration will need to be given along the way to Isocrates' views and his relations with other orators and intellectuals; and the evidence the *Panathenaikos* apparently offers of the range of attitudes to the Spartan *politeia* and its achievements to be found c. 340 in Athenian and other intellectual circles forms a good starting point. It conveniently raises questions, some of which I shall explore with the help of indications from elsewhere in the corpus of the orators.³

At the start of his broad comparison of the two cities, Isocrates calls the city of the Spartans one 'which the majority praise in moderate terms, but some speak of them as if the demigods ran the state there' (41). Some time later, after denunciation of the Spartans' treatment of their allies and subjects, and their betrayal of Greeks to the Persians, he justifies pressing on relentlessly with his argument on the grounds that much more is needed to show

the folly of those who will try to counter what I have said... Of those who approve of all the actions of the Lacedaimonians the best of them and the most sensible will, I think, praise the Spartan *politeia* and hold the same views about it as before, but will agree with what I said about their actions towards the Greeks; but those who are feeble [phauloteroi] not only than these but also than the majority, those who are unable to speak bearably about any other subject, but are unable to keep silent about the Spartans, but expect that if they perform their extravagant praises of them, they will win the same reputations as those who are thought to be much smarter and better than them: these men, when they realise that all the topics have been covered in advance, and they are unable to contradict the arguments on any single point, will, I think, turn to the argument about *politeiai*, and, comparing institutions there and here, and in particular, contrasting their self-control [sōphrosynē] and discipline [peitharchia] with our

casualness [*oligōria*], will eulogize Sparta on those grounds (12 108–11).

I take as my starting-points two features found throughout the speech which emerge with particular clarity from this passage. The first is the apparent defensiveness shown by Isocrates about his sustained attack against Sparta. He expects that there will be throughout the literate Greek world a great many who will object strenuously to his attack; that there are a great many fairly rational Laconizers, and many hysterical eulogizers of Sparta.⁴ A straw representative of these groups is produced in the epilogue. We naturally wish to know who these people were, or if, indeed, Isocrates was alluding to specific individuals at all.⁵ Was it really true that in intellectual or pseudo-intellectual circles such strong pro-Spartan reactions were regularly found? More generally, why is this last work still built on the extended comparison of Athens and Sparta, in the late 340s, when not long before in 346 Isocrates, writing as realistically as he could to Philip, presented Sparta as greatly weakened, along with the other formerly great cities, and, less plausibly, as prepared to accept unity under Macedonian leadership?⁶ By 342 BC it was, perhaps, clear that Sparta and Philip would remain enemies, as Philip more clearly gave support to the Messenians and Sparta's other Peloponnesian enemies, but it might have seemed also that Sparta would not be a very serious power.⁷ The question remains: how widespread were such supporters of a faded Sparta? The answer, if there is one, may not lie with those engaged in active politics.

My second point emerges all the more strongly from Isocrates' argument at 12 108 ff. The sensible Laconizers agree with all his arguments against Spartan imperialism, but will continue to praise her *politeia*; the less sensible will not *confess* that they agree, but their only recourse will be equally to eulogize her *politeia*, and to compare the Athenian system unfavourably with it. The straw man of the epilogue maintains this picture by defending the Spartans above all for their harmony, success in

wars, and freedom from *stasis*. The strength of their case, the base to which they all retreat, is a belief in cohesiveness of the *politeia*, and in the self-control, discipline and unity of purpose it traditionally gave to its Spartiate citizens.⁸ I shall return at several points to how Isocrates himself handled this idea, repeatedly, in the long and tortuous unfolding of his thoughts in his many pamphlets; he was of course well used to giving high praise to these features of the ancestral 'Lycurgan' constitution.⁹ It will become evident that this cohesiveness stood out more and more clearly as the central point of the *mirage spartiate*; we shall look at other expressions and developments of it in Athenian material between 370 and 330, and seek reasons why the idea of cohesion itself resisted serious examination. It may also be initially recalled that Isocrates as an educator has been associated, correctly or not, by ancient and modern scholars, with a great many of those engaged in Athenian public life, while his actual influence on practical men is very hard to assess, and has often been exaggerated.¹⁰

Spartan–Athenian relations, 370–322 BC

We need first a brief survey of the issues involved in the political relations between Athens, Sparta, and their various allies and enemies in this convoluted period. In general, we shall find that while Sparta and Athens may have had mostly friendly relations during the period, this came about not because of a strong sense of shared goals or ideals, but rather through perceived short-term advantages and common fears. It will appear that the threat of Theban power after Leuctra in fact produced more military co-operation between the two old adversaries than did the much greater threat of Macedon from the 350s, but at no point between 370 and 322 BC did they combine to any effective purpose.

At first sight, one might have expected Athenians, after the severe weakening of Sparta's forces at Leuctra, and after pro-

longed wars, hatreds and ideological opposition between them for most of the previous century, to have joined cheerfully in the further demolition of Spartan power by the liberation of the Messenians and the establishment of independent, democratic, powers in Arcadia and elsewhere, in line with the anti-Spartan programme of the Second Confederacy. Alternatively the Athenians might have stayed neutral on Peloponnesian politics to concentrate on more vital interests in the Aegean or central and northern Greece. In fact they had already, in 371, moved against Thebes at the peace conference (Xen. *Hell.* 6 1 1–20),¹¹ and after Leuctra they first failed to help the Arcadians defy Sparta and establish their federal state (Diod. 15 62 3), and then turned positively to support the Spartans against the Theban invasion (Xen. *Hell.* 6 5 33 ff., Diod. 15 63). The primary reason for this major, and arguably disastrous, transformation in the years after Leuctra was no doubt the overriding need to oppose the threatening power of their neighbour Thebes, especially since she was ideologically scarcely any closer to Athens than Sparta, and was equally exposed to allegations of recent harsh treatment of weaker neighbours such as Plataea and Thespieae.¹² To some extent sympathy for Sparta, and a desire to show generosity even to her former enemies, when they were down, may have had some effect on the assembly, along with the traditional ideal, associated in the fifth century with Cimon, of Athenian–Spartan dualism; such themes were apparently rehearsed in the speeches at the conferences and debates in 371 and 369, with their echoes of ideas expressed in the *Lysistrata* (Xen. *Hell.* 6 3 1–18; 6 5 33–49, cf. Dem. 18 98 ff., Diod. 15 63 1–2). Fundamentally, though, given all that could have been said against alliance with Sparta (and no doubt was, until the assembly made its view clear, Xen. *Hell.* 6 5 49), fear and hostility towards Thebes, and the desire to frustrate her hegemony, must have been the main motive.¹³ This hostility, exacerbated by the loss of Oropos, seems to account for the Athenian decision to ally with the Arcadians, then hostile both to Thebes and to Sparta, in 366, and to argue that

this was in fact in the long term interests of Sparta as well as of Athens (Xen. *Hell.* 7 4 2 ff.).¹⁴ During the Peloponnesian wars of the 360s, the Athenian cavalry was heavily involved, the group among whom Spartan sympathizers were perhaps most to be found.¹⁵

After Mantinea, in the Common Peace of 362-1 (the first certainly to be so named, and the first general peace not to involve Persian participation), the Athenians, like everyone except the Spartans, accepted the right of the Messenians to be a state. They also appear to have sought to protect the general provisions of the peace against possible Theban aggression by concluding extra alliances with a group of Peloponnesian states (Arcadians, Achaeans, Eleans and Phliasians), and with Thessaly.¹⁶ Athens, no doubt observing that Sparta and then Thebes were both now much weaker in the Peloponnese, and herself heavily preoccupied with the problems with Macedon, Euboea, Mausolos and her allies in the Aegean, found little reason to intervene in the Peloponnese. A moment of decision arose when Sparta saw an opportunity in Thebes' involvement in the Sacred War. Athens was from the first inclined to support the Phocians, on anti-Theban principles. The Spartans saw a major chance to restore their position in the Peloponnese by attacking Megalopolis. First they sought to win alliances throughout Greece by diplomatic assurances of their support for comparable claims to former hegemonies, including the Athenian claim for Oropos (such support turned out to be worthless). But the Athenians decided to help neither side, though they warned Sparta that they would defend the Messenians, if attacked by Sparta. Demosthenes' attempt to persuade the assembly to move now to an alliance with Megalopolis was not accepted, but it may have helped it to stay on the fence. His arguments, while they exaggerated the extent of Spartan recovery, were based on the desirability of working to keep both Sparta and Thebes as weak as possible, as well as holding the moral high ground by helping smaller states maintain their freedom (Dem. 16 *passim*, cf. also Dem. 23 102; Paus. 4 28 1-2). Athens, though cooling, was, it

seems, not yet prepared to give up her alliance with Sparta.¹⁷

As Athens came perforce to concentrate her attentions more on the attempt to check the growing power of Philip, she was no more prepared to relinquish these uneasy relationships with Sparta or with the Phocians, again on anti-Theban principles; such principles led Athenians at this time to clutch at any straws, even ones offered, however deviously, by Philip, for the humbling of Thebes.¹⁸ One effect of Athens' support for the Phocians was to help persuade the Argives, Messenians and other Peloponnesian opponents of Sparta that they were best off considering alliance and support from Philip; hence the Athenian attempts to arouse a grand alliance against Philip, whether they took place in the winter of 348–7 or (also) early in 346, achieved little among the traditional enemies of Sparta, who remained largely hostile to Athens (cf. Aeschin. 2 56 ff., 79, Dem. 19 10 ff., 303 f.). And the Phocian resistance in any case dissolved in dissension and betrayal, before the defence of Thermopylae could be entrusted either to the Athenians or to Archidamus and his 1,000 Spartans; whether they would actually have combined to achieve anything was not put to the test (Dem. 19 73–7, Aeschin. 2 132–5), and Athens was left with no choice but to negotiate with Philip.¹⁹

Between the peace of Philocrates and Chaeronea Athens' alliance with Sparta produced no worthwhile results; to such as Isocrates (12 159–60), it seemed to have no basis in trust or prospect of permanence. After initial generosity shown by Philip towards Sparta in 346,²⁰ it seems clear that by late 346 an Athenian embassy to Sparta was producing hostility among Sparta's Peloponnesian enemies (Dem. 5 17 f.),²¹ and that at least by 344 Philip was beginning to interfere on the side of Sparta's enemies as Spartan revanchism produced a new war with Messene and Argos: Demosthenes' insistence in the *Second Philippic* that Philip had commanded the Spartans to give up claims for Messene, and was already sending mercenaries and money for the war, and was expected to arrive in person (6 13–15, cf. *hypothesis* 2), delivered in the presence of Messenian and

Argive ambassadors, cannot easily be dismissed as blatant exaggeration.²² The Messenians and Argives were present in Athens to 'protest against the Athenian people because they favoured the Spartans and were assisting them in their attempt to enslave the Peloponnese, but were opposed to themselves as they were at war for their freedom' (*Hyp. to Dem.* 6 2). Demosthenes, however, both in his diplomatic tour of the Peloponnese, and in this speech, was essentially concerned to warn against trusting Philip; there is no sign that Athens was prepared to contribute anything of value to the Spartans' cause, or even to argue that they had a just case, and it appears that Philip's support and threats persuaded the Spartans to give up the war, and to divert their energies into Archidamus' last adventures to Crete and Tarentum. Philip's activities during the next few years, above all in Euboea, did, however, persuade a number of Peloponnesian states that Demosthenes' warnings might have some validity, and already by 342 some Arcadians, the Argives, Megalopolitans and Messenians allied themselves also with Athens (*Aeschin.* 3 83 and *Sch.*, *IG II²* 225).²³ In the event, by this device, they were able to stay out of the Chaeronea war, and still benefited from Philip's settlement; Sparta also took no part, preferring to maintain her concerns in Southern Italy, but Philip nonetheless settled the long-standing claims, after an invasion, entirely to the benefit of Sparta's enemies, and left her weakened and isolated.²⁴

The pattern was repeated in the next two substantial wars of liberation mounted by Greek alliances against Macedon. When Sparta under Agis III moved from her operations in support of the Persians, and, after Issus, her campaigns in Crete, to an all-out war against Macedonian power in Greece, focusing on an attack on Megalopolis, the Athenians declined to join in. Some in Athens no doubt (including perhaps the author of [*Dem.*] 17)²⁵ urged that this was the moment to go all out to destroy Macedonian rule; but more, including most notably Demosthenes, urged caution.²⁶ Aeschines and Deinarchos exploited this against him later, in 330 and 323 (*Aeschin.* 3 165–7, *Dein.*

1 34–6), and many modern scholars have seen this as a major blunder for the Athenians, and as the personal debacle that left Demosthenes apparently vulnerable to a renewed attack from Aeschines.²⁷ But they, and he, had their reasons (if we cannot recover them exactly from Aeschines' malicious quotations of what were allegedly deliberate ambiguities and obscure hints contained in Demosthenes' speech). There were up to 4,000 Athenian citizens virtually hostage as the crews of twenty triremes among Alexander's forces. There was no longer a Persian navy, and to assume in advance that Alexander would at last be defeated, or die somewhere in Asia, was extremely risky. Most importantly for the present argument, Sparta had not joined Demosthenes' alliance of 338, nor achieved anything else notable of late, and was patently concerned above all, as ever, to restore her own hegemony by destroying Megalopolis and recovering control of Messenia; hence many Greek states supplied forces for Antipater. Athens appears in fact to have already been involved on the other side, against Agis' operations in Crete.²⁸ Many Athenians, including Demosthenes and Lyscurgos, would have wished for better odds before joining an alliance led by Agis and Sparta.²⁹

Conversely, the better-supported Lamian war led by Athens after Alexander's death did not attract Spartan participation, despite the origins of the war in the man-market at Tainaron. Sparta's losses in 331 (worsened by the continuing decline in Spartiate numbers and morale), and the fact that fifty of her most distinguished citizens may still have been held as hostages, no doubt had much to do with it;³⁰ but continuing resentments against Athens, and the facts that Messene and Argos did join, may have played their part too.³¹

Thus relations between Athens and Sparta throughout this period, though notionally friendly most of the time, were throughout filled with caution and mistrust, and motivated above all by calculating self-interest and fear of other powers. Athens and Sparta were indeed closer than for much of the previous 150 years, but this supposed benevolence and

friendship never resulted in any effective military or political co-operation, nor did either side forget the reasons for hostility towards the other; neither side was prepared to do anything to risk the other recovering its former greatness. In fact, as was widely perceived at the time, the decisive threat to the chances of any mainland Greek *polis* recovering a former hegemony stemmed from Macedon; and the single most striking fact about Spartan–Athenian relations is that on none of the many occasions during Demosthenes' lifetime when coalitions of Greek states fought against Philip or Alexander did Athens and Sparta manage to combine forces to resist either king.

Even so, the purportedly friendly relations, for reasons of *realpolitik*, between Athens and Sparta in this period, and Athens' increasingly evident weakness, will have made the Athenian people less receptive of any passionate denunciation of Sparta's policies and political system. More commonly, we find recollections of her past threats, as in the balanced passage in the *Third Philippic*, where Philip's wrongdoings against the Greeks are declared to be far worse than those committed by the Spartans in their thirty years of hegemony, or those of the Athenians themselves in their seventy years (Dem. 9 22–5).³²

Helots and slaves

We may now consider what attitudes to Spartan institutions, laws and habits, and to those who proclaimed their virtues, could safely be expressed in the people's assembly and courts. One result of the liberation of the Messenian helots by the Thebans seems to have been a greater realization in intellectual circles that as legitimate and indigenous Greeks they had always had a proper claim to recover their *polis*, and correspondingly that their treatment by the Spartans had been a long-standing injustice. This found expression for example in Alcidas' rhetorical pamphlet in defence of the Messenians, which included the famous sentence 'God left all men free; nature made no man

a slave' (Ar. *Rhet.* 1373b19).³³ Relatively little trace of this can be found in Athenian public discourses. Isocrates, even when throwing all the abuse he can at the Spartans, chooses to expatiate on the evils of the initial conquest of Messenia, and on the cruelty and heavy burdens imposed on the *perioikoi*, claiming that they were in fact enslaved no less than were the '*oiketai*', and could be killed at will by the ephors. He says no more explicitly about the humiliations, burdens and killings imposed on the helots (12 177–81), nor does he express much pleasure at the liberation of contemporary Messenians.³⁴ Demosthenes in the *Meidias* (49–50) congratulated, with gross and unpleasant complacency, the Athenians for their *philanthrōpia* in affording the protection of the *hybris* law to their slaves, though these slaves were imported to Greece from the barbarians, who (i.e. the Persians) had so often wronged them; it may perhaps be suggested that he is, among other things, implicitly contrasting the generosity of Athenians to their barbarian slaves with the cruelty of the Spartans to their Greek helots. He would then be taking the opposite view to that taken by the Old Oligarch towards the same alleged phenomenon.³⁵ In his speech for the Megalopolitans, however, while Demosthenes argued that Athens ought to be prepared to defend the Arcadians and especially the Messenians against the unjust aggression of the Spartans, he also failed to take the opportunity to expand at length on former iniquities visited on the Messenians when they were helots. But his main aim in that speech, whatever his personal views of the Spartan system, was to emphasize the need to preserve the relative weakness of both Sparta and Thebes.³⁶ There were, he says, some speakers who expressed hatred either of the Spartans or of the Thebans, and the anti-Spartan speakers may have attacked the evils of the helot system; all that Demosthenes says is that such speakers took their line out of excessive favouritism for the cause of the other city (23–4).³⁷ On present evidence, this issue, which certainly seems to have caused considerable academic debate in the Athenian philosophical schools, did not arouse strong passions in the *dēmos*.³⁸

Accusations of Laconism in the courts

Some democratic hostility could still be aroused at those Athenians who might be seen as extreme Laconizers. Two cases of forensic abuse focus interestingly on different stereotypes. In the speech against Conon, three of Conon's old and regular drinking companions and witnesses, Diotimos, Archebiades and Chaeretimos,³⁹ are selected by Demosthenes' client Ariston for character assassination:

By day they put on scowling faces, claim to live Spartan lives (*lacōnizein*), have short cloaks (*tribōnes*) and thin sandals; but when they get together (sc. in the evening) they, like Conon, his sons, and all their sets of friends over many years, leave nothing evil, disgusting or impious untried (Dem. 54 33–4).

The main purpose of this is to make the point, so satisfying for those who dislike preachers of strict morals, that those who ostentatiously profess 'Spartan' austerity and moral purity indulge in disgusting debauchery and blasphemous abuses by night. But there is present also the implication, helpful to the prosecution's case, that 'Laconism' fits well with the rich, oligarchic, and hybristic milieu of Conon's friends and clubs, described in detail in the speech.⁴⁰

Second, a case of political Laconism and hostility to democracy is certainly attested, along with an interesting if predictable opportunistic switch to Macedonism, in Hypereides' speech against Philippides of c. 336.⁴¹ As Lewis argued, this Philippides is probably the same person as Philippides the son of Philomelos of Paiania. Philomelos was a pupil of Isocrates (Isocr. 15 93), as his father Philippides (I) had associated with Protagoras (Pl. *Prot.* 351a), and had been a general and frequent liturgist. His son Philippides (II) is picked out for trenchant abuse, with Mnesarchides and Diotimos of Euonymon, at the conclusion of the speech against Meidias (Dem. 21 208–9), as rich trierarchs likely to support Meidias and characters who would be natural oligarchs if they ever got into power.⁴² In this speech,

Hypereides is prosecuting Philippides on a *graphē paranomōn* for having proposed an honorific crown for the *prohedroi* of the council who had proposed, under pressure, and technically illegally, honours for certain Macedonians. The speech, that is, is an attack on an alleged oligarchically-minded pro-Macedonian. At the start of the best-preserved section Hypereides argues:

they [sc. the group including Philippides and probably his family] make it clear that even then when they were friends [*philoi*] of the Lakedaimonians they did not speak for their sakes, but because they hated this city and always cultivated those who were powerful against you. Since now their power has shifted to this man (Philip) they have chosen to *kolakeuein* him. (Hyper. *Ag. Phil.* 1–2).

Hypereides' argument, then, is that this family, and perhaps their associates, found the switch from political Laconism to Macedonism easy and natural. Since Philippides was still active as a liturgist and politician until his death c. 292, he was presumably himself not capable of displaying Laconism at the time when the Spartans still held considerable power, down to Leuctra, or even to Mantinea; the reference to the continuity of support for Athens' enemies must then be primarily to his father's activities. Philippides was mentioned often in comedy for being extraordinarily thin; this was also apparently mentioned by Hypereides in his speech (Ath. 552c–d, fr. 15b), but it is not clear whether this was connected with austere 'social Laconizing'. One may suspect perhaps that connections could be drawn between an association with Isocrates' teaching and the holding of oligarchic, and either Laconizing or Philippizing, views. What remains of interest is that in c. 336 it was helpful for democrats and anti-Macedonians to mix (where appropriate, and doubtless without too much regard for strict truth) allegations of ancient Laconism along with assertions of an oligarchic and pro-Macedonian stance.⁴³

Phocion: the acceptable face of Laconism?

So far then, we find some little evidence for the political advantages in the accusation of a Laconizing and anti-democratic lifestyle, as also for a gradual and natural decline in serious political Laconism. Of others who may have deliberately and successfully cultivated a Laconizing image, the most famous case, and, if at all true, the most important, is Phocion. Though evidently a significant figure, he is very hard to understand. One reason for this is that most material is provided by Plutarch's hagiographical biography, which no doubt owes a good deal to Demetrios of Phaleron's desire to elaborate the moving story of another philosophical victim of the wicked democracy, and is in general full of highly dubious anecdotes; another is Phocion's relative absence from the speeches of his contemporary politicians.⁴⁴ The Plutarchan picture is of a serious-minded and philosophically-trained statesman (allegedly present at the Academy under Plato and Xenocrates), with a highly austere lifestyle reminiscent both of Socrates and of Laconizers: not showing emotions, avoiding the public baths, not wearing cloaks or shoes, not waving his hands, scowling, and possessing a concise and pointed (Laconic) rhetorical style (4–5). Further, it appears that he saw the political corollary of these stances to be an austere and oppositional stance towards the people, checking and restraining their passions, and priding himself on his unpopularity (9). A few anecdotes bring Laconism explicitly into the picture; they cannot, to say the least, be relied on. One concerns the ostensibly puritanical Archibiades; his description in Plutarch (10) as a heavy-bearded, scowling Laconizer is suspiciously close to Demosthenes' in the *Conon*. When he resisted Phocion's invitation to join him in opposing a noisy Council meeting, and spoke as he thought the Athenians would like, Phocion said he might as well shave off his huge beard. It is not difficult to suppose that this anecdote has been completely invented, on the basis of a belief in Phocion's principled Laconism, and Demosthenes' memorable picture of a fake Laconizer.⁴⁵

Other relevant material comes later in the life. Phocion is said not to have shrunk from admitting a general admiration for the Spartan social system and its virtues of discipline, training and austerity. He felt compelled to impose on his unfortunate son, who showed signs of *tryphē*, a spell in the Spartan *agōgē* (however austere this still was by this time).⁴⁶ When Demades, expressing a traditional Athenian irritation at this Laconism, suggested ironically that he was prepared to help Phocion introduce the necessary motions if he wanted to bring in the Spartan *politeia*, Phocion tartly observed that talk of *philitia* (= *syssitia*) did not suit Demades' perfumes and dress (20). These anecdotes are designed to suggest that Phocion admired some traditional Spartan values, and correspondingly favoured some recovery of military training and discipline in Athens; one may compare the story of his response to Hypereides' question (when would he advise Athens to fight?) that he would advise it when her young men were ready to fight, her rich to contribute, and the politicians to stop stealing (23). This overall picture, allied to a suspicion, which received some justification at the end of his career, that he was naturally somewhat oligarchic, is supposed to have aroused a mixture of public hostility and considerable, if grudging, admiration. One can have little confidence in the accuracy in detail of any of the relevant anecdotes, though perhaps a little more in the suggestion that he sent his son to the Spartan *agōgē*.⁴⁷ But it seems likely enough that Phocion, whose greater than average reputation for 'justice' (cf. esp. Aeschin. 2 184), goodness and opposition to luxury cannot be doubted (Plut. *Phoc.* 10, and *passim*),⁴⁸ did not object to an association with some traditional Spartan values. It is possible too that he was associated with the view that they could, *mutatis mutandis*, serve as a model on which to rebuild Athens after Chaeronea.⁴⁹ If so, it is striking and important that the Athenian public tolerated, and regularly trusted with the generalship, someone known for such views.

Tyrtaios the Athenian

The suggestion of a public tolerance towards the Spartan social system can be strengthened and developed. We may now observe some further evidence that restrained, cautious and heavily qualified admiration for some Spartan traditions was increasingly acceptable to the Athenians in general. Such admiration could, we shall see, be adopted on occasions by politicians whose democratic credentials were much stronger than those of Philippides or Phocion.

One remarkable sign of interest in Spartan (pseudo-) tradition is worth some exploration: the 'Athenianizing' of the poet Tyrtaios. The fact that no source earlier than the mid-fourth century mentions the idea that Tyrtaios was an Athenian, and a neglected, lame teacher at that, has produced a long-standing, if not very intense, debate. The most radical view, that not only this idea of an Athenian origin, but also all the surviving fragments were fifth- or fourth-century inventions, seems, rightly, to have few if any supporters now;⁵⁰ equally unsupportable is the view that the story of his origin may actually be true, even though Blumenthal and Ollier did not reject it.⁵¹ The story was surely an invention by Athenians, designed in the first instance for a predominantly Athenian market. It must have been aimed at making co-operation between Sparta and Athens more acceptable; it was also perhaps designed to make it easier to praise Spartan discipline and the cohesiveness of her citizens by attributing an Athenian origin to one of their earliest leaders and a leading exponent of their values, whose poems they could assert, probably rightly, were still recited constantly in Sparta.⁵² But when was the story invented?

That Tyrtaios was an Athenian is stated as a fact by Plato in the *Laws* (629a); it is used precisely in this way, in a passage I shall return to, by Lycurgus (1 106 ff.); it seems to have been in Ephoros (Diod. 8 27 and 15 66),⁵³ in Callisthenes and in Philochorus (Strabo 8 4 10; *FGH* 124 F 24 and 328 F 21), and it is found in a full version in Pausanias (4 15 6). It seems not to

have been accepted, or thought worthy of mention, by Aristotle, as it is not found in the intelligent use made of the poems either in the *Politics* or in Plutarch's *Lycurgus*, which used Aristotle's *Constitution of the Spartans*; it is mentioned, however, in an anecdote in the Plutarchan *Spartan Sayings*, which gives Pausanias the Regent's response to the question why the Spartans gave Tyrtaios Spartan citizenship, that they did not wish a foreigner to be seen as their leader (230d). But the earliest of all the references to the story, not always noticed, seems to be an allusion in Isocrates' *Archidamus*. 'Archidamos' argues that Delphi from the start recognized Messene as Spartan, on two occasions: first in its oracle commanding the Spartans to receive it as a gift from the sons of Cresphontes, and second, when the war (i.e. the Second Messenian War) became protracted, and both sides went to Delphi. The god would not answer the Messenians, but told the Spartans which sacrifices to perform and from whom to send for help (*boētheia*) (31). It is hard to see what this can be other than a guarded and cryptic reference to the Tyrtaios story, connecting Sparta with Delphi and a Delphic instruction to request a leader from Athens. The story is kept brief, and the identities of the city and leader are perhaps withheld, since the supposed speaker is the Spartan prince Archidamos, who might not want to dwell on the importation of a foreigner; but the relevance of the story to Sparta's current needs gets across nonetheless.⁵⁴ Isocrates seems not to use it more openly anywhere, though he does develop at length ideas equally ludicrous and equally designed to assimilate the best features of ideal Spartan and Athenian institutions, such as the notion that Lycurgus took Athens as his model when devising his equally excellent democracy tempered by aristocracy, and that he gave his Gerousia the same methods of election and powers as the Athenian Areopagos (*Panath.* 153–4).⁵⁵

Evidence and probabilities alike suggest the story was invented in Athens shortly after Leuctra, and before c. 366, if the *Archidamus* was in fact composed soon after its supposed setting.⁵⁶ If it had been first produced to suit earlier Laconizing

arguments, say in Cimonian circles in the 460s, or Critian oligarchic clubs in the latter years of the fifth century, its absence from our material – and especially perhaps from Aristophanes – would be a problem. As is becoming increasingly clear, the fourth century in Athens was an exceptionally fertile period for the ‘invention of tradition’, through the adjustment or fabrication of stories, the elaboration of patriotic details, and the ‘republication’, improvement or outright forgery of a variety of written ‘documents’.⁵⁷ At all events the Tyrtaios story clearly caught on, and filled various needs, in Athens in the period under consideration. This was also a time when, because of her weakness and need of Athenian support, Sparta was in a less strong position to press her obvious objections to it.⁵⁸ The story suited the needs of (uncritical) historians who wished to take a cool, and pro-Athenian, attitude to early Spartan history,⁵⁹ philosophers and political theorists looking for common and admirable features in the archaic constitutions of both cities, and politicians hoping to soften up Athenians to the idea of hearing Spartan ideas or institutions praised. Aristotle, one suspects, displayed his critical intelligence by ignoring the idea.

Spartan institutions: no model for Demosthenes?

In the assembly and the courts, we first meet the tactic of praising a Spartan law or institution through an anticipatory objection to its use, in Demosthenes’ first speech delivered in his own person, the speech *Against Leptines* (355). To illustrate the argument that removing the practice of granting immunities from liturgies to benefactors would be unfair to benefactors and would damage Athenian interests, his selection of past historical examples displays some degree of anti-Spartan and anti-Theban sentiment. A suspiciously large number of victories over the Spartans are recalled (Dem. 20 51–78). Included in the catalogues, and the praises of Athenian heroes, especially Conon and Chabrias, are some gratuitously tart remarks about the

Spartan exercise of power after the Peloponnesian War. Conon is said to have 'accustomed the Spartans, who previously were giving orders to others, to listen to you'. The erection of the bronze statue to Conon, the first since those to Harmodios and Aristogeiton, is justified on the grounds that he too, in putting down the Spartan empire (*archē*), had put an end to 'no small tyranny' (68–70). Whether or not such language was regularly applied to the Spartan empire at the time by the Athenians, as others had a little earlier used of their own, it is significant that Demosthenes repeats it to the Athenians in 355; especially since it is not as common a mode of attack as one might think.⁶⁰

A little later Demosthenes anticipates an argument that the opponents will use:

Someone has, in all seriousness, informed me that on the question of not giving any rewards to anyone, whatever he may have done, they are prepared to say something like this, that the Lacedaimonians, who have a fine political system [*kalōs politeuomenoi*], and the Thebans do not give any such honour to their citizens, and yet there are perhaps some good men among them. It seems to me, Athenians, that all such arguments are aimed at inciting you to abolish the immunities, but in no way are they just (20 105).

One might suspect that his opponents had no intention of using such an argument, and Demosthenes is seeking to imply that they are unduly given to Spartan or Theban sympathies. But it is more likely, given the other cases of the *topos* (to be considered shortly), that Demosthenes either had personal information that such a line was being planned,⁶¹ or at least that similar comparisons were already common in debates on such issues.⁶² He resists the line forcefully and impressively in his best democratic mode, using several arguments. First, he makes the point (as is commonly done by politicians in 'liberal democracies' in comparable cases today) that one could not enjoy the free speech to make such pointed comparisons in Sparta itself. Secondly, that Sparta's customs in relation to the granting of honours do differ

from Athens, as do many other aspects of her constitution, and clearly for the worse. The single example he uses is carefully chosen to bring out his main point, which is that it is because Sparta is essentially an oligarchy that its policy on honours differs from the Athenian. The chief reward for excellence at Sparta is election to the Gerousia, whose powers, admittedly substantial, he claims are supreme; and such an oligarchic system is then suited by the restriction of further honours and immunities. At Sparta the need is to share out equally the honours given to the top people, whereas in Athens, where supreme power rests with the people, the need is to encourage competition from the elite (*agathoi*) for the rewards the people choose to grant.⁶³ Thirdly, in conformity with the state of political alliances at this period, and the memories of recent Theban 'atrocities', he is much severer on the Thebans, condemning them for 'cruelty and wickedness'. Fourthly, he suggests that such invidious comparisons should only be made when the other states are clearly more successful than one's own. Finally, he deprecates making such comparisons at all: almost, if not quite, contradicting his first point, he argues that it is not in fact right to praise Spartan or Theban laws in order to attack Athenian ones, and suggests that the Athenian people should not be prepared to listen to arguments proposing the abolition of institutions through which the democracy is preserved, when they would execute any who worked to introduce to Athens any institution through which Sparta or Thebes had been made powerful. (Dem. 20 105–11)

This interesting passage suggests, first, that it was a common tactic in the assembly and courts for those proposing (or opposing) legislative change to make comparisons between other states' laws and institutions and Athenian ones. Second, it confirms that Sparta (but not Thebes) could be praised by some Athenians for their sound political system and internal harmony. On the other hand, we see also that in 355 both Sparta and Thebes have been significantly weakened by events, while Athens has not yet been decisively humiliated, since a populist

orator could argue that 'as long as you [sc. Athenians] are more prosperous than those other peoples, in your public actions, in your harmony (*homonoia*) and in all other ways, why would you have contempt for your own customs and follow after theirs?'. We see also that such an orator may still take a stand on major 'ideological' differences between Athens and Sparta, and rule out as virtually treasonable use of a Spartan institution as a model for Athens.⁶⁴ But what is most striking is perhaps that such a line needs to be taken, which reinforces the earlier point that some Athenians are inclined to praise Spartan institutions.

Nowhere later does Demosthenes explicitly cite a Spartan law or custom with approval. Hence the possibility exists that this may represent a definite lack of warmth in the orator towards Sparta as a state, whether based on a democratic distaste for its system, or on disapproval of Spartans' treatment of the Messenians and other Peloponnesians, despite his acceptance (much of the time) of the political necessity of an alliance. Alternatively, it may reflect his judgment that a strongly democratic political stance would be adversely affected by the use of such a model. Demosthenes did play a major part in finding new political roles for the Areopagos, through his decree granting it considerable extra powers of investigation and condemnation (whatever its date and exact scope, on which cf. below), and, if this is not the same thing, through cases against pro-Macedonians using the *apophasis* procedure. But there is no evidence, and it is perhaps unlikely, that he used the model of the Gerousia in his supporting arguments.⁶⁵

We need to note, however, a different case where Demosthenes does, rather against the view expressed in the previous passage, cite approvingly one of another state's allegedly excellent laws. The passage is more interesting and revealing than might appear at first sight. Only two or three years after the Leptines speech, in the speech against Timocrates, Demosthenes, arguing strongly against ill-considered new legislation, is prepared to claim that it will not make the Athenians any worse to hear an example from elsewhere, 'especially one employed by

a well-run state [*eunomoumenē polis*]. The example comes from Locri, where allegedly the protection of existing laws was carried to such an extent that anyone proposing a new law had to speak with his neck in a noose, and was hung if the proposal were rejected. In such circumstances, not surprisingly, the only successful new law was a very special case: the penalty for knocking out another's eye being the loss of one's own, a one-eyed man, fearing his enemy, persuaded the Locrians to change the law so that someone who knocked out a man's only eye should lose both of his own. (Dem. 24 139-43)

Not all of the specific statements about the laws and practices of Locri (he must mean Epizephyrian Locri, though he refrains from saying so) are likely to be true. Probably the general principle of the *talio*, and a general severity of all penalties, played an important part in the early laws of the colony, as similar laws are attested, if not with certainty, elsewhere;⁶⁶ perhaps too there were severe restrictions against changes in the laws. But this specific device to preserve the laws, and even more the exceptional case of change caused by the one-eyed man, are the sort of stories (including many about eye-removals) that grew up readily around the figures of the early lawgivers, of whom Zaleucos of Epizephyrian Locri was a prime example, as Locri was a good example of a strict, well-regulated city.⁶⁷

Now among the plentiful speculation and debate in the fourth century, especially in the Academy, about the origins of laws and customs in Western colonies, there are many strands linking Locri with Sparta. A brief summary is needed, before we return to Demosthenes. Zaleucos and Locri were particularly rich in fascinating (and opposing) traditions. First, there are the complex local traditions that notoriously found their way into the Aristotelian *Locrian Constitution*: the colony was allegedly founded from Mainland Locris (East or West, or perhaps both, is not clear) by the cohabiting slaves and Locrian wives, whose relations began when the Locrian men were fighting with the Spartans in the First Messenian War. These stories were, very probably, devised by the Western Locrians themselves at a time

when (in the mid sixth century?) their city was closely associated with the Spartan colony Taras, and they wished to model their foundation legend on the Tarentine legend of the Spartan Partheniai. These legends were rejected as demeaning by the Mainland Locrians, whose case was forcefully presented by Timaios, though Polybius equally strongly reasserted the Aristotelian version (Polyb. 12 1–12; Timaios *FGH* 560 F 11–12). Perhaps associated with that is the story that Zaleucos was a slave shepherd, whose laws came to him from Athena in a dream (Arist. fr. 548 Rose).⁶⁸

Equally interesting are Ephoros' reported judgments, that Zaleucos put together his laws from the practices (*nomima*) of the Cretans, Spartans and the Areopagos, and that his laws were characterized by having fixed penalties for each offence (*FGH* 70 F 139 = Str. 6 1 8). Aristotle reported traditions that Zaleucos and Lycurgos were alike pupils of Thales, and Charondas of Zaleucos, but felt that such assimilations ignored chronological difficulties (*Pol.* 1274a9 ff.). The involvement specifically of the Areopagos in these speculations may well have come from Isocratean circles, or from Platonic, while the assimilation to Sparta and/or Crete probably originated much earlier in the West itself, as the Spartan connections were fostered.⁶⁹ The assimilation of early Athenian with Spartan and Cretan models for this aetiology (whether or not it was in fact based on any observed similarities between the laws) clearly fits the mental patterns and programmes of those who promulgated and took up the idea of Tyrtaios the Athenian.

How far Demosthenes was aware, when he chose this example, of these various aetiological discussions cannot be known. What matters, however, is to observe the differences between his use of this example and the other cases considered here, in which Spartan models (with or without Athenian elements in them) are held up for admiration. First, the tone of this example seems to be more than a little humorous; the serious point, that laws should not be changed too readily, comes over strongly,⁷⁰ but the unchanging laws of Locri are surely not being seriously

held up to the Athenians as genuine models, rather than as distant, crude and simplistic. Secondly, Demosthenes sedulously withholds any details that might make his example seem more immediate or relevant; he does not say which of the various Locrians he is describing, nor name the lawgiver, let alone trace any of these supposed connections between these laws and their 'models', whether those that led to Sparta, to Crete or to Athens. Thus not only has he not (as he easily might have) chosen Sparta herself as his example of a city which enjoys (or enjoyed) *eunomia* because of her respect for the laws; he has also suppressed the connections which might have linked his chosen example to Sparta.

As emerged from the sketch of Atheno-Spartan relations given above, Demosthenes did not at any point pursue the alliance with Sparta with any enthusiasm; on a number of occasions he accepted the just case of the Messenians against Spartan oppression in the past, and he opposed helping Sparta to recover a Peloponnesian hegemony (16 *passim*, esp. 9, 12, 25; 6 13; and perhaps even 21 48).⁷¹ It seems proper then to observe a marked consistency between Demosthenes' moderate hostility to Sparta and his reluctance at any point to use a Spartan law or institution as a model for Athens; and there are hints that some of his political allies may have adopted similar lines.⁷²

Aeschines and the defence of traditional morality

Aeschines forms an interesting contrast. He was, of course, constantly accused of mercenary Philippizing, but not, it seems, of Laconizing. No doubt, like most other politicians, he accepted the need at times for an alliance with Sparta; in the early 340s he was engaged with Euboulos in seeking alliances against Philip in the Peloponnese, warning apparently that Philip was already supporting the claims of Argos, Messene and Megalopolis against Sparta, with the long-term aim of dominance over the

Peloponnese. But as with Demosthenes later, this did not necessarily involve open acceptance of Sparta's case in the long disputes.⁷³ He criticised Demosthenes' apparently embarrassed failure to recommend support for Agis, but one cannot deduce his own attitude from that piece of opportunism after the event (3 165–7). His own background and upbringing were not obviously likely to produce Laconizing tendencies; his father suffered exile and impoverishment under the Thirty, and his own career as a politician began late, after careers as a state secretary and an actor.⁷⁴ Nor do his abundant uses of historical examples in his speeches show either a particular partiality, or hostility, towards Sparta; for example, the extended and wildly inaccurate account of fifth-century events that he lifted from Andocides (3 172–6 = Andoc. 3 3 ff.) concentrates on the idea that peace benefited Athens, and war damaged her, and does not display gratuitous criticism of the Spartans.⁷⁵

But we do find a striking use of a Spartan model in Aeschines' prosecution of Timarchos for *hetairēsis* of 345, his pre-emptive strike against Demosthenes' group who were preparing their case against him on the embassy to Philip. By this manoeuvre Aeschines succeeded in removing Timarchos from the political arena. The whole conservative stance of the speech must first be identified and illustrated, as the context for the appeal to a Spartan example. Aeschines presents himself throughout as a principled and moderate defender of the laws, and of the traditions of *sōphrosynē* and male citizen honour in the delicate area of pederasty. In his personal life, he presents himself as a practitioner of the traditionally approved 'love of boys' which is disciplined and non-corrupting as well as passionate and 'romantic' (cf. esp. 1 132 ff.), in contrast to the degraded love which involves the *hybris* of disgusting acts, promiscuity and prostitution.⁷⁶ His fire is directed against both the bad 'lovers' and the 'boyfriends', who degrade a noble custom; above all, of course, he attacks Timarchos himself and other pretty boys who betrayed the expectations of their friends and relations by allowing themselves to be disgraced and treated as women; persons who

showed an equal betrayal of the values of the citizen by ruining their inheritances through devotion to all types of pleasure; and who then chose to have political careers.⁷⁷ As the speech well shows, the laws concerned with these issues were directed above all against the elite who engaged actively in politics. Those who had been male prostitutes or had been kept youths, like those who had dissipated their properties, neglected their parents or been shown to be cowards, could be left free to live private lives; but if they put themselves forward as the city's representatives or advisers, they could be subjected to humiliation and loss of citizen rights.⁷⁸

Thus Aeschines adopts an ostentatiously conservative stand in this speech, against what he presents as the corruption of the traditionally honourable pederastic practices, and in defence of the full range of the traditional set of civic, familial and sexual values. In support of this stance, it seemed appropriate to him to deploy the authority of the Areopagos, at a time when it was beginning to assert a more prominent role in defence of the democracy and its traditional values. It may already have begun to assert a wider role in investigating breaches of religious procedure, for example by looking into the vexed issue of Theagenes' wife, the alleged daughter of Neaira, probably in the late 350s ([Dem.] 59 80 ff.; cf. also IG II² 204 16–22). It would shortly insist, against Aeschines' protests, on the conviction of Antiphon, the man accused of plotting to fire the dockyards, and, even more ironically, would reject, perhaps on grounds of political sensitivity, the nomination of Aeschines himself as the Athenian representative to plead at the Amphictyonic Council against the Delian motion to exclude Athens from control of the temple of Apollo at Delos (Dem. 18 132, Dein. 1 62).⁷⁹

So Aeschines tells how a member of the Areopagos, a certain Autolykos, a man 'who has lived augustly (*semnōs*) and in a way worthy of that body',⁸⁰ raised laughs, perhaps not wholly wittingly, in the assembly when expressing the Areopagos' opposition to a proposal made by Timarchos about buildings on lonely places of the Pnyx, which were known for prostitution (1 81–5).

The scene seems designed to present an image of the Areopagos as, first, composed of austere and decent-living individuals, concerned to uphold traditional standards; secondly, as composed of individuals who might be rather old-fashioned and a bit out of touch, slow to pick up *doubles entendres*; but thirdly, as a most worthy body, that still commanded deep respect from the assembly.⁸¹ A little later Aeschines goes out of his way to praise the Areopagos for giving the most accurate verdicts on the basis of its knowledge of the litigants and its own investigations, not just on the evidence presented, which explains why its reputation as a court is so high; this particular line, of course, is designed to help his case, which is essentially built on the accumulation of years of gossip against Timarchos, and can deploy no reliable witnesses (1 92–3).⁸²

It is, then, in this manufactured moral atmosphere, and towards the end of his speech that Aeschines brings in a Spartan anecdote to support his points that good laws must be upheld, and that one should not trust fine words unsupported by a sound life. It is one that is ideally suited to his needs. A Spartiate, a very able speaker, but a man of shameful life, had proposed a sensible measure: 'there came forward one of the Elders, whom they both respect and fear, and the office, called after their age, they regard as the greatest, and they appoint men to it from those who have been self-restrained (*sōphrones*) from boyhood to old age'. This member of the Gerousia then condemned them, suggesting that if they allowed men like that to be effective advisers, the land would not long remain unravaged. His solution, which was adopted, was for a less able speaker, but a man distinguished in war, justice and moral control, to make exactly the same proposal, which could then be approved. Such a life-long *sōphrōn* man as this, Aeschines concludes with heavy irony, would 'readily have allowed Timarchos or the effeminate deviant (*kinaidos*) Demosthenes to be active in political life' (1 180–1).⁸³

This anecdote is interesting for a number of reasons. It is so vague, and unadorned by dates or names, and so suited to

Aeschines' argument, that the suspicion arises that it has been invented *ad hoc*, or that its base was a floating anecdote that could be applied to any state. If either of these suggestions were correct, it would follow that Aeschines positively wanted to set his appropriate moral tale in Sparta, and to involve the Gerousia as a symbol of the defence of traditional *sōphrosynē*. If it did already exist as a Spartan anecdote (less likely, to my mind, but possible), then it remains striking that Aeschines selected a story with such an origin at this point in his speech.

It is noticeable, then, that he has to apologize for introducing a foreign, and specifically a Spartan, tale. He starts the tale off with: 'Not so the Spartans; it is a fine thing to imitate virtues [*aretai*] even in foreigners'. When he has finished with it, he makes a transition to a parallel Athenian 'ancestral' story of the unchaste daughter punished by being locked up with a horse with a careful: 'so that I should not be thought to be courting the favour of the Spartans' (182). Thus, though there was evidently still some danger for a democratic politician in offending Athenian jurors by praise of a Spartan custom, he reckoned the gain outweighed any possible opposition. Sparta thus provided him with an image of the properly disciplined and ordered society, which could plausibly be supposed not to allow notoriously uncontrolled *ex-paidika* to have active political careers, though perhaps one too where 'noble' and restrained pederastic relationships were accepted and institutionalized (as described for example by Xenophon, *Lak. Pol.* 2 12–14).⁸⁴ The Gerousia probably functions in the anecdote as a parallel institution to the Areopagos, that was praised earlier: both are given the specific role of defending the moral standards of political life. Aeschines thus may be employing the same assimilation of the two that we have seen already in Isocrates and Ephoros.⁸⁵

There is perhaps one further point. Aeschines may perhaps be subtly suggesting that the Sparta of the anecdote is the traditional, successful Sparta of the past. His elderly hero predicts that Sparta may be ravaged, if such advisers are used; the jury may reflect that the land of Sparta has been ravaged by the

Thebans. They may thus be comforted by the thought that some moral decline in Spartan politicians has set in as well. This implication would make the use of this anecdote set in Sparta safer and less threatening; an appeal to the traditional *eunomia* and *sōphrosynē* of the old Sparta can then uncontroversially support a general call to the Athenians to restore their ancient moral traditions in this area of the private lives of their leading men.⁸⁶

Lycurgos and the rebuilding of morality and culture

Aeschines may, as his chief opponent alleged, merely have employed such moral arguments opportunistically, to destroy a dangerous enemy (Dem. 19 283–6). There is no doubt that a few years later the Athenian Lycurgos did seriously seek to put such a moral and cultural programme into practice, attempting after Chaeronea to rebuild Athens on the model of a heavily idealized, classicizing past.⁸⁷ Indications of a cautious and modest use of an idealized, by-gone, Sparta as a partial model are particularly strong in his work. A complex and varied programme of rebuilding on military, educational, religious, political and cultural levels has been identified, designed to recapture what was apparently taken to be the ‘spirit’ of the fifth-century democracy, in order to be better able to emulate its military success. The programme has been profitably analysed as an uneasy combination of two elements, the conscious, flawed and futile restoration of the classical, democratic past, and an unconscious anticipation of the Hellenistic, more oligarchic future.⁸⁸ On the one hand, the nostalgic and patriotic reaffirmation of the past was achieved by elements such as the recreation (or invention) of educationally valuable myths and rituals, by the radically revised and tightened *ephēbeia*, supervised by *sōphronistai* and the *kosmētēs*, and by new productions, entombed in the new all-stone theatre, of the classical tragedies. On the other, we find signs of an increased authoritarianism: a greater role in politics is played

by powerful individuals, both the major benefactors, and those holding wide-ranging, long-lasting offices (such as Lycurgos himself); and the same man led an attempt to impose morality and patriotism through a heavy-handed series of prosecutions, using the 'democratic' procedures of *ho boulomenos* and the *eisangelia*, to deal with alleged cases of treason, adultery and (minor) breaches of ritual.⁸⁹

In these years, the Areopagos continued to play an important, and evidently disputable, role. Immediately after Chaeronea it achieved the condemnation of a few supposed traitors and defectors, including one of its own number, Autolykos, and insisted on the appointment of Phocion to defend the city, in accordance with the greater powers given it by Demosthenes, at that time or earlier in the late 340s.⁹⁰ Lycurgos, prosecuting Leocrates in 330 in a comparable case, reminded the jury of these acts and stoutly defended them, while apparently also expecting some hostile outcry in the court at the Areopagos' role (Lyc. 1 52, cf. Aeschin. 3 252). Some alarm at where this reassertion of Areopagite power might lead is reflected also in the decree (of summer 336) guarding against an anti-democratic coup or a tyranny, which made special provision that the Areopagos could not meet in such circumstances (Meritt, *Hesp.* 21 [1952] 355-9; cf. also Hyper. 2 8-9).⁹¹ The democracy in general retained its confidence in the Areopagos with its new powers; in 335 it appears to have been asked by the assembly to investigate those who had taken money from Persia (*in primis* Demosthenes) in relation to the Theban revolt, but its decision to do little or nothing was accepted (Dein. 1 10 ff.). In 330, it remains perfectly possible for Lycurgos, and even desirable for Aeschines, to give the Areopagos high praise as a stable and reliable court, 'the finest paradigm for the Greeks', and a protector of the state and the democracy (Lyc. 1 12, 52; Aesch. 3 19-20, 252). There is no evidence that Lycurgos wished the Areopagos to be given yet more powers, but he seems to have been happy to praise it for the greater part it had played in the state for more than a decade.⁹² The new and complex role of the Areopagos, and its

general acceptance, may possibly, as Wallace argues, owe something at least (though not very much) to Isocratean, and post-Isocratean, theorising, which may have made some use of a 'learned' comparison of its and the Gerousia's respective roles in a mixed constitution.⁹³ But it owes much more to the restraint and respect for some democratic traditions with which the Areopagites themselves operated, the greater respect of the fourth-century democracy for leadership and experience, and the awareness of deep crisis produced by the Macedonian victories and hegemony in Greece. One could compare the sense of discipline and restraint showed by the Athenians in the immediate aftermath of the defeat in Sicily (Thuc. 8 1 ff.).

This may possibly have some relevance to Lycurgos' use of Sparta, though he does not single out the Gerousia for his praise. In the one long patriotic and vitriolic speech that survives complete, against Leocrates, he goes further than Aeschines in adducing Sparta's idealized or invented past as a model for his Athens. One of his trademarks was the use in speeches of patriotic passages from the poets to supplement the bleak injunctions of the laws (1 100 ff.), in accordance with his belief in the great educational value of the poetic 'classics'. Disagreeing in this with his alleged teacher Plato, who preferred to write his own preambles to his laws, he reveals a patriotic and propagandist use of tragic and other texts which suggests that his conception of the value of the classics lacked the subtlety of Aristotle.⁹⁴

In this speech we find citations of the ephebic and the Plataean oaths, retelling of some improving myths, and extended quotations from Euripides' *Erechtheus* and the *Iliad* (1 76–105). He then includes also a long passage from Tyrtaios (106–7), designed to reveal to the Athenian jury the qualities admired in Sparta, which account for her success. But he is extremely careful to legitimate this idea and make it more palatable by two devices which are now familiar. First, he gives a very strong version of the idea of Tyrtaios the Athenian: Athenian excellence was so famed that the leader recommended to the

Spartans by Delphi, at the time of the Messenian War, was the Athenian: 'who of the Greeks does not know' that Tyrtaios not only defeated the enemy, but also established their system of training for the young, and left them, further, the abiding inspiration of his store of poems, which are still regularly recited to Spartiates on campaigns (1 105–7).⁹⁵ Thus he can give considerable praise to the Spartans' courage, military successes and educational system, while claiming that they were all in this sense Athenian achievements. Second, the examples of Spartan triumphs are safely put in the past, and suggest a cosy parallelism between the two cities, namely the Persian Wars, where Thermopylae balances Marathon, and a vague reference to ancient Spartan disputes with Athens for the hegemony. On this basis he can conclude with an appeal to Athenians, and especially the young, to imitate the successes of both the Athenians and the (Athenian-inspired) Spartans, rather than the cowardly actions of Leocrates, in the struggle to recapture Athens' glories; there is naturally no interest in current Spartan activities. It seems possible also to see here some ideological connection between this praise of Tyrtaios' patriotic verses and of the idealized, Tyrtaios-taught Spartan *agōgē* and the Lycurgan renewal and reform of the *ephēbeia*.⁹⁶

Lycurgos maintains this praise of Spartan institutions later, with two further illustrations of its citizens' exemplary patriotism: he mentions the strict treatment handed out to Pausanias, walled up in the temple of Athena Chalcioikos for impiety and treason, and quotes an alleged law – which he has certainly made to seem more general and extensive, if not actually made up – imposing the death penalty with humiliation on those who refused to risk their lives for their country (1 128–30).⁹⁷ He, like Aeschines, shows some concern at again praising the Spartans (128) – 'do not be upset with me if I again mention these men; it is good to take examples from a city with *eunomia*'. But he concludes very positively that this is indeed a fine law, suitable not only for them, but for the rest of men, to encourage them to face death through fear of one's own citizens (130). More

strongly than Aeschines, with less trepidation, and repeatedly, Lycurgos praises those Spartan ideas, education practices and laws that are, or can be doctored to seem, directly suited to his case. Any possible antipathy to such procedures is carefully mitigated, by making the poet Athenian, and by placing Spartan adherence to such laws, and consequent success, essentially in the past. The message seems to be that Athens can model herself on the practices that led to the former glories of both the great cities; the concern is wholly with the comparison between present Athens and the classical past of Athens and Sparta. There is no interest either in whether Sparta will be able to embark on a similar reform, or in what has caused Sparta's decline.⁹⁸

Conclusions

Even in what we can deduce of the work of intellectuals active in Athens, we can find, with the exception of the greatest, relatively little trace of any serious attempts to explain Spartan decline in terms of internal tensions or contradictions. When Isocrates is making his most serious criticisms of Sparta, in the *Panathenaios* and elsewhere, he does not question the internal effectiveness of the Spartan *politeia* in creating a cohesive *homonoia* of the equals; nowhere does he explain her defeat at Leuctra and subsequent weakness (on which he expatiates both in *Peace* and *Philip*) in terms of internal economic tensions, loss of manpower, or excessive political competitiveness, though he does seem to suppose, in his emphasis on Spartiates' greed and idleness, in contrast to their traditional social practices, some decline in the overall collective austerity of the *syssitia* (*Peace* 96, 102–3, *Areop.* 7).⁹⁹ Thus he places the blame for the decline on their collective acceptance, above all in the ways they treated other Greek states and individuals, of the habits of greed, injustice, idleness and cruelty, comparable to the ways in which Spartans had always treated the *perioikoi*; it is this he punningly suggests that was the

beginning or cause (*archē*) of the downfall of Sparta's empire (*archē*), because it united so many against her (*Peace* 100–5). In the *Panathenaikos*, however, he argues, against the Laconizers, that her cohesion, her *homonoia*, was positively damaging, because it enabled her to exploit others more effectively, like a well-organized gang of pirates (225–8); and he criticizes the *agōgē* on the grounds that it undervalued literary culture and philosophy (208–10) and harmfully encouraged and rewarded stealing and deception (211–14).¹⁰⁰ It is possible that Isocrates, like many, failed to observe, or to take in, the severity of the demographic crisis and internal tensions and conflicts among the Spartiates; at all events in this last work he chose rather to build up Sparta's record as an effectively organized state of predatory, philistine criminals. It is not easy to determine whether this was primarily because he felt a faint alarm at the possibility of an anti-Philip coalition between Athens, Sparta and others; because he was in fact responding to the strength of idealized and unrealistic Laconism in his circle; or because in his last work he was looking back over his life-time, and seeking some consistency with his repeated earlier emphases on Spartan importance and internal cohesion.

Of his two pupils who dominated history-writing in their generation, Ephoros seems often to have shown a more critical attitude towards Sparta than towards Athens, whereas Theopompus was consistently hostile to Athens and democracy, and at times, at least, rather more favourably inclined to Sparta. Neither, however, seems to have offered any deeper analysis of Spartan internal tensions. Ephoros saw considerable similarities between the development and nature of the original Spartan political and social systems and those of the Cretan states (he was criticized for this by Polybius, 6 45–7), and denied that the Cretans learned them from Sparta; he attributed some role to the Athenian Tyrtaios, and made some assimilation also between Spartan and Cretan institutions and the early Areopagos (Diod. 8 27, 15 68, *FGH* 70 F 139). He attributed, in traditional fashion, Sparta's hundreds of years of stability and hegemony to her

laws and institutions, creating courage and internal cohesion; and then blamed the decline and loss of empire on the relaxation of these laws, and the resort to luxury (*tryphē*) and idleness (*rhaithumia*), and the passion for wealth that came with the use of coined money (Diod. 7 12). Relatedly, and also in a quite Isocratean manner, he saw the loss of the Spartan empire as the result of a collective failure to treat subjects with humanity (*philanthrōpia*) (cf. esp. Diod. 15 1–5).¹⁰¹

Theopompos presents a contrasting, and more complex picture. There is some evidence of early Laconism. His father was allegedly exiled from Chios for Laconism (*FGH* 115 T 2), and he wrote a *Lakōnikos* (but also a *Panathenaikos*); more significantly, it can be argued that his first major work, the *Hellēnika*, which he composed between c. 355 and 344 bc, and brought to an abrupt close at the year 394 bc, concentrated on the Spartan hegemony, and perhaps gave a relatively favourable portrait of Sparta. Fragments attest an unusually laudatory account of Lysander, emphasising his self-control and absence of *tryphē*, and some similar praise of Agesilaus (*FGH* 115 F 20, 22, and cf. also F 321, 333).¹⁰² Subsequently, in the *Philippika* the focus, and some of the praise, were transferred to Philip, though in it Philip was not immune from the violent abuse which Theopompos flung at the excesses of all leaders, and it is clear too that he criticized failings by many individual Spartans (for one instance, Pharaoh, *FGH* 115 F 192). There is, however, little sign in what remains of any general analysis of Sparta's decline. A number of fragments show an interest in slavery, perhaps natural in a Chiot aristocrat. In one he make a very sharp distinction, perhaps innovatively, between helot-type systems, based, like Sparta's, on conquest of Greek communities, and systems based, like Athens' and Chios', on foreign chattel-slavery, and in another he described the helots themselves as subjected to cruel and bitter treatment (*FGH* 115 F 122 and 13). We cannot say, though, that he connected these helot problems with the manpower shortage and the causes of Sparta's decline.¹⁰³

For a genuinely critical approach to Spartan structural

problems as part of the explanations of her decline, we have to look rather to some veiled, or pained, criticisms in Plato (above all the ideal type of the timocratic state in the *Republic* and the tart comments in the *Laws*), and to the more forthright and penetrating analyses of Aristotle in the *Politics*; both are studied elsewhere in this volume.¹⁰⁴

We have seen then that there remained in Athens much ambivalence towards Sparta. There were a few, more or less serious, overt Laconizers, towards whom public hostility and suspicion remained; there was among the leaders at least one admirer of the (old) Spartan system, Phocion, who retained considerable public confidence. The main fears and concerns after Leuctra naturally focused first on Thebes and then on Macedon. But the beliefs in the strength of Spartan internal cohesion, and the value of the Lycurgan *eunomia* and *agōgē* as models, retained their remarkable appeal; many supposedly reflective minds did not subject them to the scrutiny they deserved. What is notably interesting and new in the speeches of this period is an apparently increasing acceptability of the appeal in the Athenian assembly and courts to this *mirage* of Spartan *homonoia* and *eunomia*. The argument was employed by politicians of varying political persuasions (though, not, it seems by Demosthenes and perhaps others such as Apollodoros or Hypercides), for their own political purposes, some of which may have been largely opportunistic. But these *topoi* worked broadly to support the reformist, if backward-looking and conservative, ideas and policies which, at least from the 340s, and more insistently in the 330s, were designed to build a more disciplined, cohesive and even 'moral' Athens. Hence one can identify a number of reasons why many Athenian politicians felt it more helpful to praise (past) Spartan institutions and values than to criticise her present record. This was no doubt not a central or even necessary part of Aeschines', Lycurgos' or Phocion's programmes; but still, to this limited extent, the traditional Spartan *politeia* seemed 'good to think with', if it did not produce any good thought. The effective thinking on this

subject was left to the age's greatest mind, the man who was given the job that Isocrates and Speusippos had both sought for their ex-pupils.¹⁰⁵

NOTES

- 1 See Gray, this volume.
- 2 On Isocrates' treatments of Sparta, see the full account and bibliographies in Tigerstedt, *The Legend of Sparta in Classical Antiquity* vol. I (Stockholm 1965) 179–205, Ollier, *Le mirage spartiate* (Paris 1933) vol. I 329–71, and more briefly Rawson, *The Spartan Tradition in European Thought* (Oxford 1969) 39 ff. The sophistic contradictions are emphasized by Baynes who (over)translates wickedly but aptly a phrase applied by the Laconizing student to the master's discourse – 'packed with all kinds of sophistic subtlety and faked history' (*Panath.* 246), and provocatively suggests its applicability to the works as a whole ('Isocrates', in *Byzantine Studies and Other Essays* (London 1955) 147–8).
- 3 Various views on the purpose of the *Panath.* are surveyed by Tigerstedt *Legend of Sparta* vol. I, 187 ff., and cf. Gray, this volume.
- 4 As Tigerstedt (vol. II, 481 n. 732) points out, the bitter language applied to the less intelligent Laconizers suggests Isocrates had in mind those upper-class, but not seriously educated, characters, whose praise of Sparta was based essentially on snobbish social prejudice.
- 5 Cf. Tigerstedt, vol. I, 187 with n. 709, rejecting, rightly, attempts to bring into the argument: a) Dioscorides the alleged pupil of Isocrates and author of a *Spartan Constitution*, whom Jacoby plausibly split into two, dating the author of the work on Sparta, about which virtually nothing is known, to c. 100 BC; b) Plato's *Laws*; and c) (most absurdly) Xenophon's *Lak. Pol.* Cf. also Ollier, *Le mirage* vol. I, 339 n.1, and vol. II, 58–9.
- 6 The answer may be provided, as many have argued, above

all by the extended, carefully distorted, praise of Agamemnon as the uniter of all Greeks in harmony in an invasion against all Asia and many other barbarian cities, for the length and apparent irrelevance of which the writer makes so elaborate and knowing an apology (72–90). This is best seen, I am sure, as a veiled reminder that the solution for Greece is still, according to Isocrates, the Hellenic crusade against Persia led by Philip, for whom, as Isocrates said earlier, Argos was his ‘homeland’ (*Phil.* 32), and Greece as a whole his common ‘homeland’ (*Phil.* 127; cf. Perlman, in *Ancient Macedonia* vol. III, (Thessaloniki 1983) 211 ff.). The heavy emphasis throughout the work on Persia, and Sparta’s repeated sell-outs to her, the constant play with mythological parallels as serious argument (cf. e.g., Markle, *JHS* 96 (1976) 80 ff.), the clear absence of any plausible alternative leader of an Asian campaign other than Macedon, and the line taken in the (probably genuine) *Ep.* 3, all support this view, and suggest that one purpose of the attacks on Sparta is to discourage any Athenian–Spartan co-operation against Macedon. Cf. Tigerstedt, *Legend of Sparta* vol. I 477–9, for literature on this question; the other view, that at the end Isocrates despaired of Philip, seems to me much less plausible (e.g., Rostagni, *Scritti minori* vol. II (Turin 1956) 153 ff.; Momigliano, *Filippo il Macedone* (Florence 1934) 190 ff.; Baynes, ‘Isocrates’ 159–60.)

- 7 See below.
- 8 Cf. esp. *Panath.* 215 ff., 258–9.
- 9 E.g., *Nicochl.* 24, *Archid.* 48, 59 ff., *Areop.* 60–1, *Panath.* 153 ff.; cf. Cloché, *REA* 35 (1933) 139 ff.
- 10 Great caution is needed with these arguments; not all the attested filiations of pupils to teachers are reliable, and Isocrates’ pupils clearly did not all share his views either on political principles or practical policies. Cf. Harding, *CSCA* 6 (1973) 138 ff.
- 11 On the peace of 371, Ryder, *Koine Eirene* (Oxford 1965) 70 ff. and App. IV.

- 12 On the importance of this decision, cf. e.g., Davies, *Democracy and Classical Greece* (Glasgow 1978) ch. 11. On the trouble Athens' allies in the Confederacy had in understanding the change (and other aspects of Athenian policy), cf. her response to Mytilene, Tod II 131 = Harding 53, with Ryder, *Koine Eirene* 77, Cargill, *Second Athenian League* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1981) 144–5 and Cawkwell, *JHS* 101 (1981) 53.
- 13 On self-interest behind such changes in alliances, Isocr. *Philip* 42 ff.; Dem. 23 122; Aeschin. 2 164; and see Brunt *CQ* 19 (1969) 245 ff.
- 14 Cf. Ryder, *Koine Eirene* 82 ff.; Roy, *Hist.* 20 (1971) 581 f.; Buckler, *Theban Hegemony* (Harvard 1980) 193 ff.
- 15 Cf. Bugh, *The Horsemen of Athens* (Princeton 1988) 145 ff., Davies, *Democracy and Classical Greece* 225. The cavalry had little success until the last battles at Mantinea.
- 16 Tod II 144, 147 = Harding, 56, 59, Roy, *Hist.* 20 (1971) 586–8.
- 17 Cf., e.g., Jaeger, *Demosthenes*, 82 ff., and most recently, Buckler, *Philip II and the Sacred War* (Leiden 1989) 28 f., 87 ff.
- 18 Cf., on these greatly disputed questions, the recent discussion, with reference to the contributions of Griffith, Cawkwell, Ellis and Markle, in Buckler, *Philip II*, 121 ff.
- 19 Cf., e.g., Cawkwell, *REG* 73 (1960) 416 ff.; Ellis, *Philip II* 100 f.; Griffith, *History of Macedonia* vol. II (Oxford 1979) 329 ff.; Hamilton, 'Philip II and Archidamus', in Adams and Borza (eds) *Philip II, Alexander the Great and the Macedonian Heritage* (Washington 1982) 71 ff.; Buckler, *Philip II* 125 ff.
- 20 It is likely that Sparta's representation was not removed from the Amphictyonic Council (despite Paus. 10 8 2, and *Syll.* 224); cf. Roux, *L'Amphiktionie, Delphes et le temple d'Apollon au iv^e siècle* (Paris 1979), 6 ff.; Ellis, *Philip II* 272 n. 157: Delphic records show continued Spartan presence. It is also unlikely that the requests from Messene and Megalopolis to be admitted were granted; I would follow

- Griffith vol. II 481 f., rather than Ellis 134 on the result of the requests and the date of the application.
- 21 Cf. Markle, *JHS* 96 (1976) 82 f.; Hamilton, 'Philip II and Archidamus' 78 f.
 - 22 Griffith, vol. II, 474 ff., against Cawkwell, *CQ* 13 (1963) 165 ff.
 - 23 Griffith, vol. II, 482 f.; McQueen, *Hist.* 27 (1978) 42 ff.; Hamilton, 79 ff.
 - 24 On the chronology and the details of events in Euboea, cf. esp. Brunt *CQ* 19 (1969) 251 ff.; on Sparta's absence from Chaeronea, and the settlement, cf. Ellis, 203 f.; Hamilton, 81 ff.; Cartledge and Spawforth, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta* (London 1989) 13 f.
 - 25 On the date of this speech, Cawkwell, *Phoenix* 15 (1961) 74 f.; *CQ* 19 (1969) 172 n. 2. Various views are held on chronology, and hence on the relation of the revolt's stages to Alexander's whereabouts; decision is difficult: cf. Badian, *Hermes* 95 (1967) 170 ff., and idem (with second thoughts, accepting Cawkwell's views on the end of the revolt) *Cambridge History of Iran* vol. 2, 445 ff.; Cawkwell, *CQ* 19 (1969) 170 ff.; Bosworth, *Phoenix* 29 (1975) 27 ff.
 - 26 Plut. *Dem.* 24 suggests Demosthenes made a brief attempt to win support for Agis, but the basis of this suggestion is not clear; perhaps no more than the equally Plutarchan belief in Demosthenes' constant opposition to Macedon (cf. Will, *Athen und Alexandros* (Munich 1983) 75 n. 154).
 - 27 See Badian and Cawkwell, articles cited in n. 25. What contribution was made to Demosthenes' decision by his pupil and friend Aristion's relations with Hephaistion and Alexander remains unclear (Aeschin. 3 162, Marsyas, *FGH* 135 F 2, Berve, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage* vol. II (Munich 1926), no. 120).
 - 28 See Potter, *ABSA* 79 (1984) 229 ff.
 - 29 Cf. for these various arguments, e.g., de Ste Croix, *Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (London 1972) 164-6, 376-8; Bosworth, *Conquest and Empire* (Cambridge 1988) 198-204;

- Cartledge and Spawforth, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta* 21–3. On the attitudes of the Peloponnesian states other than Sparta, McQueen, *Hist.* 27 (1978) 40 ff.
- 30 Hostages: Aeschin. 3 133; Diod. 17 73 5; and cf. the apparently gloating joke in Antiphanes' comedy *Kitharistes* (115 K/A = Athen. 681c): 'Didn't the Spartans puff themselves that they would never be ravaged? Now they serve as hostages and wear the purple hair-nets.' Cf. also for low morale, the number of *tresantes*, their pardon, as after Leuctra, and continued resentment, Diod. 19 70 5; and see McQueen, *Hist.* 27 (1978) 53 ff.
- 31 Cf. Will, *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique* vol. I (Nancy 1979–82) 29–33; Cartledge and Spawforth, 24–6.
- 32 Cf. also Dem. 2 24, 4 3–4; and Ollier, *Le mirage* vol. I, 83 ff.
- 33 Cf. Garlan, *Slavery in Classical Greece* (Ithaca 1988) 125; Cartledge, in *CRUX: Essays presented to G.E.M. de Ste Croix* (Exeter 1985) 44. Cf. also Theopompos on the helots, below, p. 381.
- 34 See, e.g., *Panath.* 45–6, 70–1, 91–2 166, 177–181; *Philip* 48 ff., on the Peloponnesian consequences of post-Leuctra events, not singling out the liberation of Messenian helots. Of course the immediate problems of these upheavals above all for the propertied classes in various Peloponnesian states (cf. also *Arch.* 64 ff.), his distaste for Thebes, and his lingering hopes than Sparta might yet participate in an Eastern crusade (still alive by his letter to Archidamos, *Ep.* 9, of 356) would have removed any pleasure he might otherwise have felt. An anecdote attached to Diogenes the Cynic suggests sympathy for the long-term sufferings of the Messenians at the hands of their 'neighbours': Aelian, *Var. Hist.* 9 28.
- 35 [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* 1 10; also Dem. 9 3. On the *hybris* law and slaves, cf. Fisher and Murray, in Cartledge, Millett and Todd (eds), *NOMOS: essays in Athenian law, politics and society* (Cambridge 1990) chs 6 a) and b); and Fisher in Powell (ed.) *The Greek World* (forthcoming).

- 36 Cf. esp. 4 ff., 30 ff.; for recognition of the justice of the Messenians' fear of Spartan aggression, 9–10, 13, 25.
- 37 Cf. Schäfer, *Demosthenes und seine Zeit* 2nd edn (Leipzig 1885–7) 463 f.
- 38 Cf. Plato, *Laws* 776; Arist. *Pol.* 1269a34–b13.
- 39 Nothing else is known of this Diotimos (PA 4387) or of Chaeretios (PA 15210); Archebiades (PA 2303) had a brother rich enough to act as one of the guarantors for the ships for Chalcis in 341 (Davies, *APF* 819; *IG* II² 1623 line 192), and recurs laconizing in a Phocion anecdote (below, p. 360).
- 40 Cf. on such activities, Murray in Murray (ed.) *Sympotica* (Oxford 1990) 157 ff., identifying a 'recognized style of aristocratic behaviour', and Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens* (Princeton 1989) 257 ff. Not all who actually adopted such behaviour, of course, were necessarily of aristocratic birth. This speech is usually dated to c. 341 on the basis of the mention of garrison duty at Panacton 'two years ago' (54 3–5), and the mention of armed expeditions 'in the area round Panacton' at the time of the false embassy trial in 343 (Dem. 19 326). Mention of a general, taxiarchs and 'others of the *stratiōtai*' (5), implying that regular troops were present, perhaps in combination with the ephebes who regularly garrisoned border forts, argues for the date (so Ober, *Fortress Attica* (Leiden 1985) 98, 217 f.), unless such reinforcements occurred at other times in this period of unsettled relations with the Boeotians.
- 41 On this character (PA 14361) Lewis, *ABSA* 50 (1955) 17 f.; Davies *APF* 549 f.; MacDowell on *Meidias* 208. On the speech in its context, also Engels, *Studien zur politische Biographie des Hypereides* (Munich 1989) 137 ff.
- 42 On Diotimos (PA 4386, an anti-Macedonian) and Mnesarchides (PA 10242 = 10245, cf. Davies, *APF* 163 ff., 392 f.) Demosthenes' remark 'I don't wish to say anything mean about them; I'd be mad to do so' (207) should probably be taken as an ironic, and hence derogatory, reference to the

power of their wealth and oligarchic convictions, rather than a compliment as MacDowell (*ad loc.*) sees it, in view of the uninhibitedly hostile remarks of 209–10.

- 43 Such accusations, of a switch from Laconism to Macedonism among those of (even moderate) oligarchical sympathies, may well have been levelled at Isocrates himself, and at probably others of his pupils besides Philomelos. In the *Antidosis* (354, before he looked to Philip) Isocrates essentially defends himself against the charge of having been too rich and having taught oligarchic principles, but he does take care to quote from earlier works showing how much more worthy he thought Athens was of the hegemony than Sparta (15 56 ff.), praises Timotheos for having created by the victory of Naxos the reason for her disaster at Leuctra (15 108–10), and he criticises the *dēmos* strongly (admittedly in the context of the Peloponnesian War) for having damaged their own interests by too readily accusing their best citizens of Laconism (15 318–19). He says nothing, naturally, of the *Archidamos*, which would not have helped this case. Such suspicion of him may also be still relevant to the insistence on the depth of his anti-Spartan beliefs in the *Panathenaïkos*.
- 44 Cf. Robert, *CRAI* (1945) 526 ff.; Gehrke, *Phokion* (Munich 1976) and Tritle, *Phocion the Good* (London 1988).
- 45 The anecdote is apparently accepted by Ollier, *Le mirage* vol. I, 180 ff., reported non-committally by, e.g., Rawson, *Spartan Tradition* 44 f., doubted by Gehrke, *Phokion* 146 ff.
- 46 How austere the Spartan *agōgē* was in this period, or was thought to be in Athens, is not easy to determine. In Attic comedy, the assumption still exists that in the adult messes black broth and archaic austerity are in force (Antiphanes, fr. 46 K–A = Athen. 142 f., cf. Rawson, *Spartan Tradition* 36 n. 3), and such a view presumably underlies Diogenes the Cynic's best attested remark, that the wine-shops (*kapēleia*) at Athens are their *phiditia* (Arist. *Rhet.* 1411a24–5; cf. also D.L. 6 2 39; 6 2 59; and perhaps 6 1 6 for Antisthenic

and Diogenean maxims in praise of Spartan austerity). Plato in the *Laws* seems to believe the *agōgē* and the messes are still austere enough; cf. Powell, this volume pp. 296 f. On the other hand Aristotle suggests the messes had undergone significant relaxation, under the bad influence of the ephors (*Pol.* 1270b30 ff.), and later Cynic material seems to give a similar impression, e.g., Lucian, *Dial. Mort.* 1 4. Cf. Ollier, *Le mirage* vol. II, 7 ff.; Rawson, *Spartan Tradition* 86 f.; David, *Anc. Soc.* 13/14 (1982/3) 74 ff., 91 ff.; Fisher in Powell (ed.) *Classical Sparta* 27 ff., 41.

- 47 Cf. again Gehrke's doubts, *Phokion* 146 ff.
- 48 Though Tritle, *Phocion the Good* 141 ff. makes far too much of it in his portrait of Phocion as a rare exponent of co-operative and Platonic justice in a world of competitive, Homeric politicians (based on an uncritical and over-simplified application of the Adkinsian view of Greek values). Cf. my review, *JACT Anc. Hist. Bur. Broadsheet* 25 (1989) 4 ff.
- 49 Cf. Rawson, *Spartan Tradition* 45.
- 50 Scepticism was started by Verrall, seeing him as a fifth-century poet (*CR* 10 (1897) 269 ff.), and more influentially by Schwartz, who thought the figure and the poems alike were invented in Athens in the fifth century (*Hermes* 34 (1899) 428 ff.). These views were generally rejected, yet for long various surviving poems were held to be later compositions (e.g., Jacoby, *Hermes* 53 (1918) 1 ff.); the general authenticity of the surviving poems was well asserted by Jaeger, *Five Essays* (Montreal 1966) 101 ff., and has been accepted by almost all recent historians of early Sparta.
- 51 Blumenthal in *RE* XIV A col. 1945; Ollier, *Le mirage* vol. I, 188 ff.
- 52 E.g., Wilamowitz thought it might have been invented in the fifth century (*Textgeschichte der griech. Lyriker* (Göttingen 1900) 96 ff.) and cf. Jacoby (*Hermes* 53 (1918) 9–10; *FGH* iii B (Suppl.) i 583 and n. 4), holding that to be at least possible, while also putting the case for a post-369 invention. Recitations: Athen. 630e–f = *FGH* 328 F 216,

- Lyc. 1 107, and see most recently Bowie, in Murray (ed.) *Sympotica* (Oxford 1989) 224 ff., against Jacoby, in *FGH* iii B (Suppl.) i 583.
- 53 Cf. also Just. 3 5, Polyainos 1 17, Tigerstedt *Legend of Sparta*, vol. 1, 210. Ephoros may thus have referred to the story of Tyrtaios as Athenian, and as a commander of the Spartan army in the Second Messenian War, both in his treatment of those events, and in recapitulation of Messenian history at the time of the refounding of Messene in 369.
- 54 Cf. Tigerstedt, *Legend of Sparta* vol. I, 198 and n. 798, and the Loeb Isocrates I, p. 364. It is probable too that Isocrates allows phrases of Tyrtaios' adjurations to affect the language he wrote for Archidamos: cf. 6 55 and Tyrt. fr. 5 (West) and 6 88 ff. and fr. 10 (the poem quoted by Lycurgos). Cf. Wilamowitz, *Textgeschichte* 109; Tigerstedt, *Legend of Sparta* vol. I, 46, 200.
- 55 One might see another even vaguer allusion to the Tyrtaios myth at 12 155. Cf. also *Areop.* 61 for Spartan 'democracy', and in general Cloché, *REA* 35 (1933) 141–3.
- 56 Cf., e.g., Rawson, *Spartan Tradition* 41; Dover, in *Entretiens Hardt 10: Archiloche* (Geneva 1964) 92–3, Prato's edition of *Tyrtaeus*, p. 2 f. On the purpose and date of the *Archidamos*, Harding, *CSCA* 6 (1973) 137 ff., following Baynes 'Isocrates' 160 f., is, I think, right to see it as largely a sophistic piece, finding the best arguments for such a Spartan speaker, but it does not follow that it is the counter speech to the *Peace*, and therefore to be dated c. 356, nor that it had no political purpose; Isocrates may well have found an occasion to compose such an exercise in the mid 360s, and to have been ready to be 'economical with the truth' in order to bolster Sparta's position in the Peloponnese and against Thebes. Cf. Moysey, *AJAH* 7 (1982) 118 ff.; Wallace, *Areopagos Council* 161.
- 57 Cf. above all Habicht, *Hermes* 59 (1961) 1 ff., and Thomas, *Oral Tradition and Written Record in Classical Athens* (Cambridge 1989) 83 ff. One may still argue about the

authenticity of, or genuine elements residing in, this or that individual document or story, but one cannot doubt that the needs of political propaganda and the greatly increased respect for written records produced a good deal of careful doctoring and invention.

- 58 The fact that the Suda entry reports first that Tyrtaios was a Spartan (or a Milesian) before giving the Athenian version, may suggest that at some point, and perhaps in the later fourth century, Spartan tradition reclaimed him (cf. Jacoby, *FGH* iii B (Suppl.) ii 479 n. 1).
- 59 On Ephorus, cf. below.
- 60 On the use of the imperial tyranny idea here and elsewhere, cf. Tuplin in *CRUX* 359 ff.
- 61 Leptines had apparently backed Callistratos' line on supporting Sparta against Thebes in 369, with the memorable metaphor that he would not let Greece become one-eyed (*Ar. Rhet.* 1411a5); this was perhaps a reworking of the metaphor about Greece not becoming lame, attested in the Hetoimaridas debate in Sparta (*Diod.* 11 50 4) and in the quotation from Ion of Chios, giving Cimon's argument for aiding Sparta after the earthquake in the 460s (*Plut. Cimon* 16 10 = *Ion FGH* 392 F 14; cf. de Ste. Croix, *Origins of the Peloponnesian War* 170–1). Hence he may well have been prone to judicious praise of Spartan institutions.
- 62 In general, on the use of anticipatory arguments in such speeches, Dover, *Lysias and the Corpus Lysiacum* (Berkeley 1968) 167 ff.
- 63 On Demosthenes' grasp of the importance of freedom of speech, and of the reciprocal offering of honours to the elite, in a democracy, cf., e.g., Hansen, *Athenian Democracy in the age of Demosthenes* (Oxford 1991) 25, 77; Sinclair, *Democracy and Participation in Athens* (Cambridge 1988) 188 ff.
- 64 Cf. Rawson, *Spartan Tradition* 45 f.
- 65 Cf. the alternative accounts on these difficult issues, in Wallace, *The Areopagos Council* 113 ff., 175 ff.; Hansen, *Athenian Democracy* 290 ff.

- 66 Cf. Gagarin, *Early Greek Law* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1986) ch. 3, esp. 66 (with n. 63), 76, on this case; he calls Demosthenes, optimistically, 'our most reliable source', but doubts the one-eyed man story; also Saunders, *Plato's Penal Code* (Oxford 1991) 83, 358.
- 67 Cf. Szegedy-Maszak, *GRBS* 19 (1978) 199 ff., esp. 206 ff. For the story of Zaleucos' son's condemnation to blinding for adultery, and Zaleucos' offering up one of his own eyes, cf. Ael. *VH* 13 24; for another doubtful case causing an exception to the severity of the noose law, Polyb. 1 16. Some, investigating these traditions, follow Timaios (*FGH* 566 F 130) and deny, probably hypercritically, the very existence of Zaleucos: e.g., van Compernelle, *AC* 50 (1981) 759–69.
- 68 On these traditions, cf. e.g., Walbank, *Selected Papers* (Cambridge 1989) 269 ff.; Graham, in *CAH*² III 3 169 ff.; for the associations with Spartan Taras, cf. esp. Sourvinou-Inwood, *CQ* 24 (1974) 186 ff.
- 69 Cf. also Jacoby on *FGH* 70 F 138–9, and Rawson, *Spartan Tradition* 56.
- 70 For the importance in the fourth century of the clear distinction between laws and decrees, and the emphasis on the primacy and stability of laws, cf. Hansen, most recently in *Athenian Democracy* 165 ff., esp. 173 ff. Already, in Thucydides' version, Cleon in the Mytilene debate had urged, forcibly fudging any distinction between laws and decrees, that sticking to bad 'laws' was preferable to swift changes of mind in response to over-clever arguments (Thuc. 3 37); some of the language might cause one to suspect an Athenian–Spartan contrast, but 'Cleon' is, I think, careful not to make that explicit.
- 71 Some further cases may be mentioned. In the speech for the Rhodians (351), Demosthenes chooses to give extensive praise to the Argives for helping Athenian exiles against Sparta after 404 (15 22 ff.); and in the *Second Philippic* (344), Demosthenes implicitly accepted the justice of the

Messenians' case, by arguing that if Philip now accepted the Messenian claims against Sparta, he could not consistently also claim that he was right to return Orchomenos and Coronea to Thebes (6 13). On the other hand, when engaged in an all-out attack on Philip in the *Third Philippic* (341), Demosthenes puts together and condones the sufferings of the Greeks at the hands of Sparta and Athens as at least committed by genuine Greeks, like the mistakes of a wealthy and illegitimate son, in contrast to the series of humiliations inflicted by Philip, a barbarian from an ignoble region where you could not even buy a good slave, which was more like having one's property destroyed by one's slave or supposititious upstart (9 30–2).

- 72 Here the extended treatment in Apollodoros' speech *Against Neaira* of the relations between Athens and Plataea, and the grant of citizenship to the Plataeans after the Spartan atrocity of 427 BC, may be suggestive. The chief rhetorical point of this excursus is to highlight the Plataeans' nobility as deserved recipients of Athenian citizenship, in contrast to Neaira; hence the picture has above all a pro-Plataean perspective, and appears to be using a Plataean source in addition to Thucydides and popular memories (cf. Trevett, *CQ* 40 (1990) 407 ff.). But the turning of the narratives seems to have the effect also of sharpening an anti-Theban and perhaps also an anti-Spartan tone: in particular the emphasis on Pausanias' hybriistic acts and humiliation, and on this as a motive for Spartan attacks in 431, seems to support an anti-Spartan line (cf. Gernet, Budé, ad loc.); Nouhaut, *L'Utilisation de l'histoire par les orateurs attiques* (Paris 1982) 263, and Trevett, art. cit., are perhaps unduly cautious on this. At least we can say that Apollodoros, at a time when he was generally supporting a Demosthenic line in foreign policy, had no objection to elaborating such an anti-Spartan account, and it is possible that he welcomed it.
- 73 Aeschin. 2 79; Dem. 19 10 ff., 303 f., and for the allegations, Isocr. *Phil.* 5 74–5. Cf. n. 19 above.

- 74 Aeschin. 2 78, 147 f.; Dem. 18 256 ff. etc. Aeschines himself also mentions his maternal uncle, Cleoboulos, assisting as general in a naval victory over the Spartan Cheilon during the Corinthian War (2 78). He was at least in his 40s when his political activities begin to be recorded, and may well have been in his 50s: see Lewis, *CR* 8 (1958) 108, not conclusively refuted, in my judgment, by Harris, *CP* 83 (1988) 211 ff.
- 75 Cf. Thomas, *Oral Tradition and Written Record* 118 ff. The chief bias evident is straight from Andocides, in favour of the deeds of his own relatives.
- 76 Thus it is not accurate to see Aeschines as the defender of the ordinary bourgeois citizen against the traditional aristocratic modes of behaviour, or as opening up a class-divide (as recently Ober, *Mass and Elite* 257 or Todd, *JHS* 110 (1990) 165 f.). The practices of pederasty held up for praise and blame by Aeschines, located above all in the gymnasia and symposia (and perhaps also in the rhetorical and philosophical educational establishments attached to the gymnasia), involved different types of members of the elite, that is both traditional *kaloi kagathoi* like perhaps Misgolas, a *kalos kagathos* given to a life-long pursuit of flute-players (1 41 ff.), and newer men like Hegesandros, Hegesippos, or Aeschines himself (1 55 ff., 135 ff.). Aeschines is purporting to defend the values of a 'decent' pederastic lifestyle that may earlier have been more exclusively associated with the traditional upper class, against alleged 'abuses' to which they were no doubt always open. Cohen's recent work on the 'deep-rooted anxiety' of Athenian attitudes to pederasty (e.g., *P&P* 117 (1987) 3 ff.) also underestimates the importance of Aeschines' insistence on the propriety and indeed nobility of the better forms of these relationships.
- 77 The case against Timarchos himself importantly included allegations of property-dissipation on the life of luxurious pleasures (1 94–105), as well as *hetairēsis*.

- 78 Cf. esp. Aeschin. 1 160, 195, and also Dem. 22 30 f. Cf. above all, after Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (London 1978): Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure* (Harmondsworth 1986) esp. 217 ff., Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire* (London 1990) 54 ff.
- 79 Cf. Wallace, *Areopagos Council* 108 ff., 176 f.; Hansen, *Athenian Democracy* 291 f.; Ellis, *Philip II* 131 ff., on these events. On the dates of the Timarchos speech and the Antiphon and Amphictyony interventions, cf. most recently Wankel, *Hermes* 116 (1988) 383 ff. (Timarchos' trial early in 345), against Harris, *Hermes* 113 (1985) 376 ff. (late summer 346).
- 80 He was, ironically, the man later convicted by the Areopagos for sending away his wife and children after Chaeronea: Lyc. 1 52 f. and fr. III; Humphreys, 'Lycurgus of Boutadae: An Athenian Aristocrat', in Eadie and Ober (eds), *The Craft of the Historian: Essays in Honour of C.G. Starr* (New York and London 1985) 200 f.
- 81 The passage certainly does not give a critical picture of the Areopagos, as Wust thought (*Philipp II von Makedonien und Griechenland* (Munich 1938) 47–9; cf. Ostwald *TAPA* 86 (1955) 125 n. 1100); nor is it quite as unambiguously deferential as Knox implies (*JHS* 110 (1990) 253). But the main impression is of earned respect for a solemn and traditional body concerned to defend 'public morals'; cf. also the tradition that Areopagites were forbidden to write comedies (Plut., *Mor.* 348b). Was Autolykos cunningly getting laughs, while pretending to be more solemnly innocent than he was, or was he really unaware of the effects? Either way, he presumably came over rather like many a High Court judge in Britain ('Who are the Beatles?' etc.). Cf. also Winkler, *Constraints of Desire*, 52; and on the tension between decorum and humour in public meetings, Halliwell, *CQ* 41 (1991) 292 ff.
- 82 On gossip in such cases, cf. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* 30, 39 ff.; Winkler, *Constraints of Desire*, 58 f., and most generally on gossip in Athenian society, Hunter, *Phoenix* 44

- (1990) 299 ff. On such praises of the Areopagos as a court, cf. Wallace, *Areopagos Council*, 126 f.
- 83 On the *kinaidos* as the deviant reverse of the hoplite citizen, cf. above all Winkler, *Constraints of Desire*, 46 ff. The startlingly sudden designation of Demosthenes too as a *kinaidos* refers to his allegedly effeminate clothes, dubious relations with pupils like Aristarchos, and the obscene interpretation of his childhood nickname *bat(t)alos*; cf. also 1 126, 130–1, 164, 171 ff.; 2 99, 149–52, and see Wankel on Dem. 18 180.
- 84 Cf. also for Athenian views on Spartan pederasty, Xen. *Symp.* 8 35; *Hell.* 4 1 39 f., 5 4 25, 57; *Ages.* 5 4–7; Plato *Symp.* 182a–c; *Laws* 636c, 836a–c, and the other passages, especially from Attic comedy, collected by Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* 185 ff., and for an excellent discussion of perceptions and realities, Cartledge, *PCPS* 27 (1981) 17 ff.
- 85 So, in a passage referred to above, Isocrates claims Lycurgos was imitating the Areopagos in instituting the Gerousia (12 153–4; cf. Wallace 173); Ephoros, *FGH* 70 F 139 and see above.
- 86 In Plut. *Praec.* 801c and *Lac. Apophth.* 233 f. we find shortened versions of the same story; in the first of these passages the deviant Spartan is called Demosthenes! Alternative sources besides Aeschines need not be postulated. For use in Athenian oratory of the *topos* that Laconia was at last ravaged by the Thebans, cf. Dein. 1 73, [Demades] 12.
- 87 On his work cf. Mitchel, *Lycurgan Athens* (Cincinatti 1970); Will, *Athen und Alexander* part II; Humphreys, 'Lycurgus of Boutadae'.
- 88 Above all by Humphreys, art. cit.
- 89 Cf. Rhodes, *Athenian Boule* (Oxford 1972) 107–9, 219–20; Humphreys, art. cit. esp. 201 ff., 218 ff.
- 90 Cf. Lyc. 1 52, and fr. III; Humphreys, art. cit. 200 f.; Wallace, *Areopagos Council*, 176 ff.
- 91 On the debate on the reasons for this decree, cf. Ostwald, *TAPA* 86 (1955) 120 ff. (decree was anti-Macedonian, fearing the Areopagos might be pro-Macedon); Mossé, *Eirene* 8

- (1970) 71 ff. (decree was a loyal response to Philip, directed against an anti-Macedonian Areopagos); and Humphreys art. cit. 200 f.; and more fully Wallace, *Areopagos Council* 179 ff. (decree was a warning marker put down against the Areopagos, or any one else, reasserting the commitment to fundamental democratic principles: the most likely view).
- 92 Cf. also Wallace, *Areopagos Council*, 195 ff., on Lycurgos and the Areopagos.
- 93 Cf. Wallace, *Areopagos Council*, 190 ff., a cautious account, making also some use of texts from the *Politics*, which are not, as he says, to be overplayed.
- 94 Cf. Humphreys, 'Lycurgus of Boutadae' 214 ff.; I have benefited also from hearing an unpublished paper by Oswyn Murray, on Lycurgus and the death of tragedy.
- 95 Cf. on this passage, Bowie in *Sympotica*, 225–9.
- 96 Cf. Rawson, *Spartan Tradition*, 47; on his ephebic reforms, Humphreys, 'Lycurgus of Boutadae' 206–9.
- 97 Sparta's laws were said to be kept unwritten (cf. Cartledge, *JHS* 98 (1978) 35 ff.), and even if Lycurgos is accurately reproducing what was said to be a Spartan practice, it does not follow that he had an authentic Spartan text read out. MacDowell (*Spartan Law*, 69–70) observes an apparent discrepancy between this 'law' and other evidence on the shaming punishments given to the 'Tremblers' (*tresantes*) (see *Spartan Law*, 44–6), and suggests that the law Lycurgos quotes (MacDowell writes, perhaps misleadingly, of Lycurgos' having 'the text' read out) may be that apparently mentioned in Arist. *Pol.* 1285a7–10, permitting a king to execute a coward (though the precise circumstances are left a little uncertain because of the corruption of the text). Just how much Lycurgos has distorted Spartan 'law' remains uncertain.
- 98 Cf. also Tigerstedt, *Legend of Sparta* vol. I 204–5. Lycurgos' failure to comment on the spectacular recent breakdown of the laws concerning *tresantes* after the battle of Megalopolis (McQueen, *Hist.* 27 (1978) 59) is startling proof of his lack of interest in contemporary Sparta.

- 99 Cf. also *Bus.* 17–20, for early criticism of Spartan *pleonexia* and *argia*, as a result of misuse of their institutions.
- 100 Cf. the brief assessment of Cartledge, *Agesilaos* (London 1987) 401 f. See also some adumbrations of criticism of Spartan *paideia*, in contrast to Athenian, in *Paneg.* 49–50, with Baynes, 'Isocrates' 151–3.
- 101 Cf. Momigliano, *RFIC* 13 (1935) 180ff = *Quinto Contributo* (Rome 1975) 683 ff., esp. 698 ff.; Tigerstedt, *Legend of Sparta* vol. I, 206–22.
- 102 On Theopompos' attitudes, see Momigliano, *RFIC* 9 (1931) 230 ff. = *Terzio Contributo* (Rome 1966) 366 ff.; Tigerstedt, *Legend of Sparta* vol. I 222–7; Bruce, *History and Theory* 9 (1970) 86 ff.; Lane Fox, 'Theopompos of Chios and the Greek World', in Boardman and Vaphopoulou-Richardson (eds), *Chios* (Oxford 1966) 110 ff., and most recently Shrimpton, *Theopompos the Historian* (Montreal 1991) ch. 2, suggesting that the *Hellēnika* did not necessarily give a favourable picture of Spartan policies.
- 103 Cf. also *frr.* 40, 171, 176 for Theopompos' further interest in helots and related serf-systems. Cf. Vidal-Naquet, *The Black Hunter* (London, 1986) 168 ff.
- 104 Cf. recently, David, *AJP* 89 (1977) 486 ff.; *Anc. Soc.* 13/14 (1982/3) 67 ff.; Cartledge, *Agesilaos*, 402 ff.; and the papers by Powell and Schütrumpf in this volume.
- 105 Some evidence for the (covert) competition for the job as tutor of Alexander seems to be provided by the letter to Philip attributed to Speusippos, which attacks both Isocrates and Theopompos, and seems to recommend Antipater of Magnesia (*Ep. Socr.* 30; cf. Bickermann and Sykutris, *Berichte uber d. Verh. d. Sachs. Akad. d. Wissensch.* (Leipzig 1928) 1 ff. for its authenticity, but also note the re-statement of doubt by Bertelli, *Atti dell' Accad. della Scienz. di Torino* 111 (1977) 75 ff.). On the place of this letter, if genuine, in the intellectual debates and the competition for Philip's favour, cf. above all Markle, *JHS* 96 (1976) 80 ff.; also Ellis, *Philip II* 160 f. Even if a composition of a

decade or two later, it may yet preserve reliable information. Speusippos and the Platonists in Athens, if disappointed that it did not go to Antipater, would no doubt have been pleased that the job went to the ex-Platonist Aristotle rather than to an Isocratean.

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